

The Circle

Volume 3, Number 2

Winter, 1976



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EXERCISE AND THE WICKEDNESS OF MAN
PLUS: JACK MOUNTAIN, SHORT STORIES, POETRY, AND MORE

the Circle

Volume 3, Number 2

Winter, 1976

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A NOTE ON STYLE

The variety of approaches to writing and design in this issue reflects the *Circle's* function as a laboratory publication. Although each piece was reviewed by staff members and representatives of the Editorial Board, the appearance of any article, story, poem, drawing, or photograph does not necessarily indicate unanimous critical approval.

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Nancy Playle, Billy Leonard, Linda Leaming

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ILLUSTRATION BY NANCY PLAYLE

THE UNCERTAIN STATE OF ALABAMA PRISONS:

an interview with Judson Locke

BY CECELIA HARDEN AND TINA DAVIS

Prison reform—the newspaper and television news media are constantly blaring out the inadequate conditions of the Alabama prison system. In June, 1975, Federal Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr., shook the state by rendering a decision requiring massive reforms in the prison system within the next two years.

In the midst of the resulting turmoil, Judson Locke was appointed Commissioner of Corrections, the chief administrative officer of the Alabama prison system. In an interview with members of *The Auburn Circle* staff on January 5, Mr. Locke came through as a forthright, confident man determined to meet the deadlines of the

court and to fulfill his own hopes and plans for improving the Alabama prison system.

We began the interview with Mr. Locke by questioning him about the basic problems within the system:

Circle: What are the major problems that face incoming prisoners?

Locke: Well, there are a multiplicity of problems that are an offshoot of congestion, of overcrowdedness. Privacy is one of the main needs. Just proper housing, food, clothing, recreation—all of these things. Individual safety from attack—assault from other inmates. All of this is compounded by overcrowdedness and lack of

personnel. This is one reason I say that the number one problem is supervision. If you had more supervision it could eliminate a lot of assaults.

Circle: How many supervisory personnel are now employed by the prison system?

Locke: We have 807 personnel currently, and we have funding to increase this to 912 in 1976. We are asking for funding this next budget to bring us up to a total of 1,600 personnel.

Circle: Where do you get personnel?

Locke: Through the State Employment Service. Incidentally, we are under minimum standards now, a

law passed over two years ago. Of course, we worked to get this passed, but we are upgrading the correctional staff. A person has to have a high school education to be employed. Then he has to get 240 specialized hours of training in law enforcement—the same type of training that the state trooper or any other type of law enforcement officer gets. After he gets this training, his salary is upgraded. So we are attracting better types and becoming more professional. We still need to pay more and to continue to upgrade.

Circle: Even with changes, will the problem of overcrowding be alleviated? Or, will there still be too many prisoners held in county jails awaiting transfer to the state prison system?

Locke: Well, we have projected needs for housing for 9,000 inmates in 1980. So we are building into our budget for the next four years capital outlay to accommodate one-fourth of this increase each year. This projection is based on the hard statistics that we've had for the last twelve months—the intake versus outgo. Prior to the injunction, we were realizing an increase of about 109 prisoners a month—that is, the number of prisoners coming in exceeded those going out through parole and sentence completion by 109.

Circle: What is the present state prison population?

Locke: In round figures, the present population is 4,500. This is down from 5,100 back in August—because the county jails are holding newly-convicted prisoners as we seek to lower the

prison population to the court-ordered level.

Circle: Going back to your prediction for 1980, you are saying that the prison population will double by then?

Locke: Yes. People are still being convicted. We already have 1,000 out there in the counties who are sentenced to state sentences but whom we can't bring in because of the overcrowdedness.

Circle: In your opinion, how could the situation be corrected so that we don't have people returning every six months to a year? Do you have any programs in mind for rehabilitation?

**'The Board of Corrections
is a
whipping boy
for the combined ills
of the whole system'**

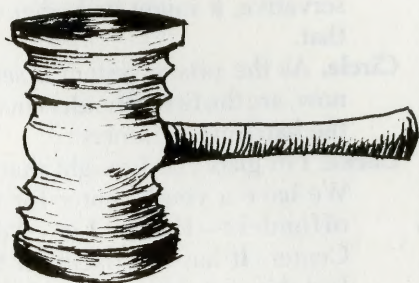
Locke: Well, you have to put quotes around rehabilitation. Our recidivism rate is no worse than that of any of the other states. At present there is no real answer for recidivism. In my opinion, we have to have, of course, professional-type programs: vocational rehabilitation and educational programs. I think we need to look at the whole spectrum of criminal justice. The Board of Corrections is a whipping boy for the combined ills of the whole system, including a lot of what Chief Justice Heflin is trying to remedy through judicial reform. I agree with quite a bit of the proposed judicial reform. We have statutes on the books that make certain acts against society criminal which I don't think should be there. The glaring one would be arresting a person for public drunkenness. He should have other types of treatment. We have a lot of mentally incompe-

tent people incarcerated. Alternatives to imprisonment are needed to fit these categories.

We have a bond system which contributes to the overcrowdedness. We've got people who are in jails because they can't afford the bond. It's just a matter of finance. You know bonding is a money-making process—people make money out of bonding other people. If the state provided bonding, it could become a source of revenue for the cities, the counties, and the state, instead of for the individual bondsmen. It would make bonding more equitable—less profit involved. We have a lot of offenses for which people could be released on their own recognizance, whereas they are not now because of the lucrative business.

**'...you're
sleeping
next to this fellow
who committed
the same offense
and he gets
a year and a day
and
you get eight years.'**

And, we have an inequity involved in the differences in sentences. You have a man who commits an offense in one particular circuit and another who commits the same offense in a separate location. In one circuit, you get a year and a day; in another circuit, you get six to eight years. And then you're brought into the prison system, and you're sleeping next to this fellow who committed the same offense that you've committed, and he gets a year and a day, and you get eight years. This inequity causes distrust of the judicial system. The unfairness of it is apparent. We need less latitude in sentencing. Insofar as possible, punishment should fit the seriousness of the offense committed. I don't think



there should be so much latitude in sentencing. I don't think that the individual judge, because of his—I hate to say this—idiosyncrasies, should have that much latitude in sentencing a person.

I also agree with judicial review. I think we should have a form of review similar to that proposed by Chief Justice Heflin. Then you would have an automatic review of the excessive sentences by a panel of judges.

**'In Alabama
if you get a 10-year
sentence, you get 5 off
for
good behavior.
The professional
is counting
on that.'**

But aside from all this, I think you need to take a look at the total picture. All of the leniencies of the criminal justice system apply to every individual, and I don't think they should. I think after a point they contribute to crime. I'm talking about probation, parole, time off for good behavior, all this. The professional criminal has all these options. He calculates to go out there and commit offenses because he thinks crime pays. Number one, he's a professional, and when he gets caught, he's prepared to get a good attorney for defense, and he's hoping for probation. Then if he doesn't get probation, he's banking on plea bargaining—getting a lower sentence. Then, when he comes into prison, he's getting the benefit of time off for good behavior. In Alabama, if you get a ten year sentence, you get five off for good behavior. All right, he's counting on that. He's also counting on parole. So what I'm saying is that I think that somewhere along the line we've got to reduce all these options and these alternatives. The professional shouldn't have all these leniencies.

The first offender, if applicable, should receive probation. We now have a lot of them coming into the system who never have had probation because of some of these latitudes that the judges have. But I do think that we should remove all these leniencies for people, with rare exception, other than first offenders. The professional needs to know this. If he knows that the second time around he doesn't get probation or he doesn't get good time off or he doesn't get parole except in rare circumstances, he's going to be able to make a better decision about whether to commit an offense. If he's staring a straight ten in the face, no time off for good behavior and no parole consideration, he can make this decision a whole lot better. This is somewhat along the line of what the governor is proposing when he says get hard on criminals. I don't know in detail what he is talking about, but you can't lock up a broad category of law breakers and throw away the key because then you're talking about

**'you can't lock up
a broad category
of lawbreakers
and
throw away the key'**

sure enough building a lot of institutions. If all people who commit a certain offense are given life sentences without benefit of parole from the outset, then you're going to have some mammoth institutions. We've got roughly 500 lifers now, maybe 600, in Alabama. So if you're talking about a person with a life sentence not being eligible for parole, then in X number of years you're going to have a big population of lifers.

I think another deterrent is capital punishment. I believe in capital punishment.

Circle: Has that been reinstated?

Locke: There was a bill passed in this last session which has to be reviewed as to the constitutionality. But I think it really is kind of watered down. Alabama has a statute that the Attorney General in cooperation with this department is testing now. We have one individual prisoner who, according to this statute, fits the latest Supreme Court decision on capital punishment—the one who killed the officer at Fountain. The classic argument for capital punishment is that paroled or escaped murderers continue to kill. Now we had a person serving a sentence for killing another person—a life sentence. He escaped this last year from one of the institutions and killed another person, a civilian, in his escape attempt. He killed him and took his automobile. If he had gotten capital punishment and had been executed, he wouldn't have been around to have committed this other murder.

Circle: What percentage of the prisoners are repeaters?

Locke: Between 60 and 70 percent, around 65 percent.

Circle: How many of these do you feel are the professional types?

Locke: Well, after a point, when they come back two or three times we must consider them professionals. I'd say of the 65 percent, over 75 percent are professionals. Over 75 percent of those are dedicated to crime. Some of them are circumstantial types that get drunk or something like that and get in trouble or commit a crime of violence or a crime of passion, but the dedicated burglar or other criminal is different. About 75 percent of repeaters are professionals; that might be conservative, it might be higher than that.

Circle: As the prison system is set up now, are the first offenders in with the hardcore prisoners?

Locke: I'm glad you brought that up. We have a youth center for first offenders—Frank Lee Youth Center. It has a capacity of 200. Just this past year we doubled the

capacity of it. We have also proposed to make Draper a first-offender facility.

Circle: Draper is where you have the educational program with Alexander City Junior College, isn't it?

Locke: Right. Of course, we also have a program down at Fountain with Jefferson Davis Junior College in Brewton, which is a big operation and getting bigger. They've got, I believe, ninety-seven enrolled at Fountain in the junior college.

Circle: In this program, are the prisoners sent to the campuses or the instructors to the institutions?

Locke: The classes are at the prison. Alexander City Junior College has a unit there at the prison. Instructors from Jefferson Davis come to the facility at Fountain. The students at Alexander City furnish their own books and tuition. Of course, tuition can be waived for persons who can't afford it—deserving students who don't have the G.I. Bill or other sources. At Fountain, Jefferson Davis does not charge tuition at all. Prisoners have to pay for their books and supplies, but the tuition is free.

Circle: How do you decide who is eligible for this program?

Locke: They have to qualify, like any student, to enroll. They have to have a high school degree and they take entrance exams. The same criteria apply to the inmates that apply to anyone else. Incidentally, the inmates had a higher scholastic average than the other students, the non-inmates.

**'the inmates
had a higher
scholastic average
than the other
students,
the non-inmates'**

Circle: What about the first-time offenders who are high school dropouts and have no skill?

Locke: We have vocational programs. We have John F. Ingram Trade School, and we have adult basic

education available at all institutions.

Circle: How many of the institutions have vocational schools?

Locke: Draper, a complete vocational school comparable to those in the civilian community at Frank Lee Youth Center, and also one that was just built at Holman and is not functioning up to full capacity right now.

Circle: Is psychological evaluation of the incoming prisoner one of your plans?

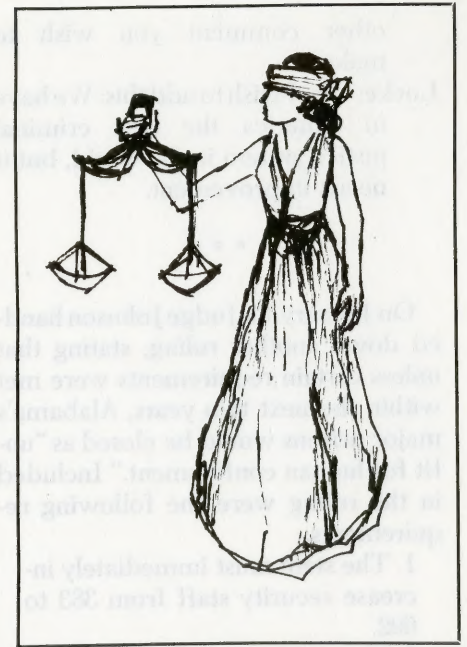
Locke: Well, we do have a small psychological assessment unit that is in operation now and has been for about eight months. It is located at Kilby. Right now we are making plans to send this unit out into the community to compare prisoner I.Q. scores with those of working people to see how inmates stand on job placement.

Circle: You are in favor of expanding this psychological program?

**'Your citizenship
is not taken away
when you commit
an offense.
You're still a citizen
of the United States,
and you've got
Constitutional guarantees.'**

Locke: Oh, yes, it is vital. You have to have it to identify problem areas and refer these on to the clinical psychologist (we have two employed now). Another possible solution to this problem which we are going to introduce at the proper time is to set up a volunteer program. Of course, we have initial plans already made and worked out. But these programs are difficult to institute until the prison population gets down to a manageable number.

Circle: What can we do about the average citizen's knowledge of the prison situation? How does he see the criminal?



Locke: Well, the average man on the street is punitive. He could not care less unless he is directly affected by a relative or close friend. He is the "Archie Bunker" type. The average person loses sight of the fact that the people who are convicted are still citizens. Your citizenship is not taken away when you commit an offense. You're still a citizen of the United States, and you've got constitutional guarantees. Right now, we are not able to provide all these in Alabama prisons because of lack of space, personnel, proper funding. I'm talking about minimum health needs, adequate food, adequate clothes. All of these are constitutional guarantees that you or I or anybody who might have to go to prison shouldn't have to suffer loss of just because of a conviction. No one should be subjected to all the inhumane treatment that does go on in institutions.

The man in prison is out of sight, out of mind, unless he is personally related. If people would look at it from a standpoint of "how would I want to be treated if I were incarcerated," it would be a whole lot better. We'd have more funds and better facilities.

Circle: Have we omitted anything significant? Do you have any

other comment you wish to make?

Locke: Yes. I wish to add this: We have in America the best criminal justice system in the world, but it needs improvement.

* * *

On January 13, Judge Johnson handed down another ruling, stating that unless certain requirements were met within the next two years, Alabama's major prisons would be closed as "unfit for human confinement." Included in the ruling were the following requirements:

1. The state must immediately increase security staff from 383 to 692.
2. The prison must provide no less than sixty square feet of living space per inmate, by July 13, 1976.
3. The state must prepare a plan for the classification of all inmates by April 15 and must contract with the University of Alabama's Department of Correctional Psychology to aid in the implementation of the plan.
4. A report on the implementation of health standards at Draper and Fountain prisons must be made by October 15, 1976.
5. By December 15, 1976, certain minimum standards at these units must be in effect.
6. A report on health standards at Holman and Kilby must be filed no later than June 15, 1977.
7. By December 15, 1977, minimum standards must be in effect at the Holman and Kilby prisons, the two major institutions in the system.
8. The state must provide a trained dietician, and a college graduate as recreation director for each unit.

After this ruling, we spoke with Mr. Locke a second time:

Circle: How much has the overall outlook changed since Judge Johnson's latest ruling?

Locke: Well, of course, it has changed considerably. We are going to have to have more expenditure. Right now, we've got to have interpretations on certain legal ter-

minology, interpretations of the order itself, that will have bearing on cost-factor implementation. For instance, what does the court mean when it says living area? We're required to have a minimum of sixty square feet per inmate of living area. If this means just bed area, it's one thing; it's more restrictive. If it includes day room and this sort of thing, it's less restrictive. Requirements will have a definite, important bearing on cost. You've got to know this to determine whether we are going to be more or less left with building strictly maximum security single-cell-type facilities as opposed to renovating existing facilities, primarily dormitory types. So it is a vast change we're considering. A lot of what is required of us under the order we have been trying to do for some time without having proper funding.

Circle: Was the timing or the magnitude of the ruling a surprise to you?

Locke: No.

Circle: What about the deadlines?

Locke: Well, of course, you know these deadlines, some of them, will be impossible to reach as far as renovating the two older facilities, Draper and Fountain, by December of 1976. It wouldn't be possible if we had the money today to do this by that time. I think what is indicated is a show of good faith and effort toward implementing court orders in a time frame with the resources that we have, which we intend to do. We intend to abide by the order—which is the law—and implement as much as we can and show good faith in doing it. Some of the requirements we feel are exaggerated and go beyond what we feel should be required, such as furnishing a trained dietician for each institution and a sports director with a college education.

Circle: Do you have any idea how the state will finance these changes? Will it have to be through another bond issue? Through new taxes?

Locke: No, I don't know. I'm sure that

various avenues are being considered at this point by the legislature. The committee is meeting now. Additional revenues, more than likely, will have to be forthcoming. There's not enough for all the needs now. If this means new taxes or whatever, it is up to the legislature and other sources such as revenue sharing. We are just going to have to make the good-faith effort after we have these clarifications given to us and develop plans and start implementing them. The powers that be know what it will cost and will have to try to get the money.

Circle: Overall, is your basic philosophy the same since we last talked with you? Are your goals basically the same?

Locke: Absolutely. I reiterate that we have been seeking to make corrections and rectify conditions, to make changes; we have new programs and we are not going to let those that are presently operating go lacking because of this order. We are going to press on and in the best way we can continue to implement and make progress. It doesn't alter my philosophy or that of the board or the long range plans and goals. It might help implement some of them.



ARACHNE

quickly twirling,
eight points dancing
pricked upon silk, yellow
and black.
swinging; swinging
like the face of a watch
on a long gold chain.
she's dancing the dance
of life;
wrapping you in lace.

—Doug Knotts

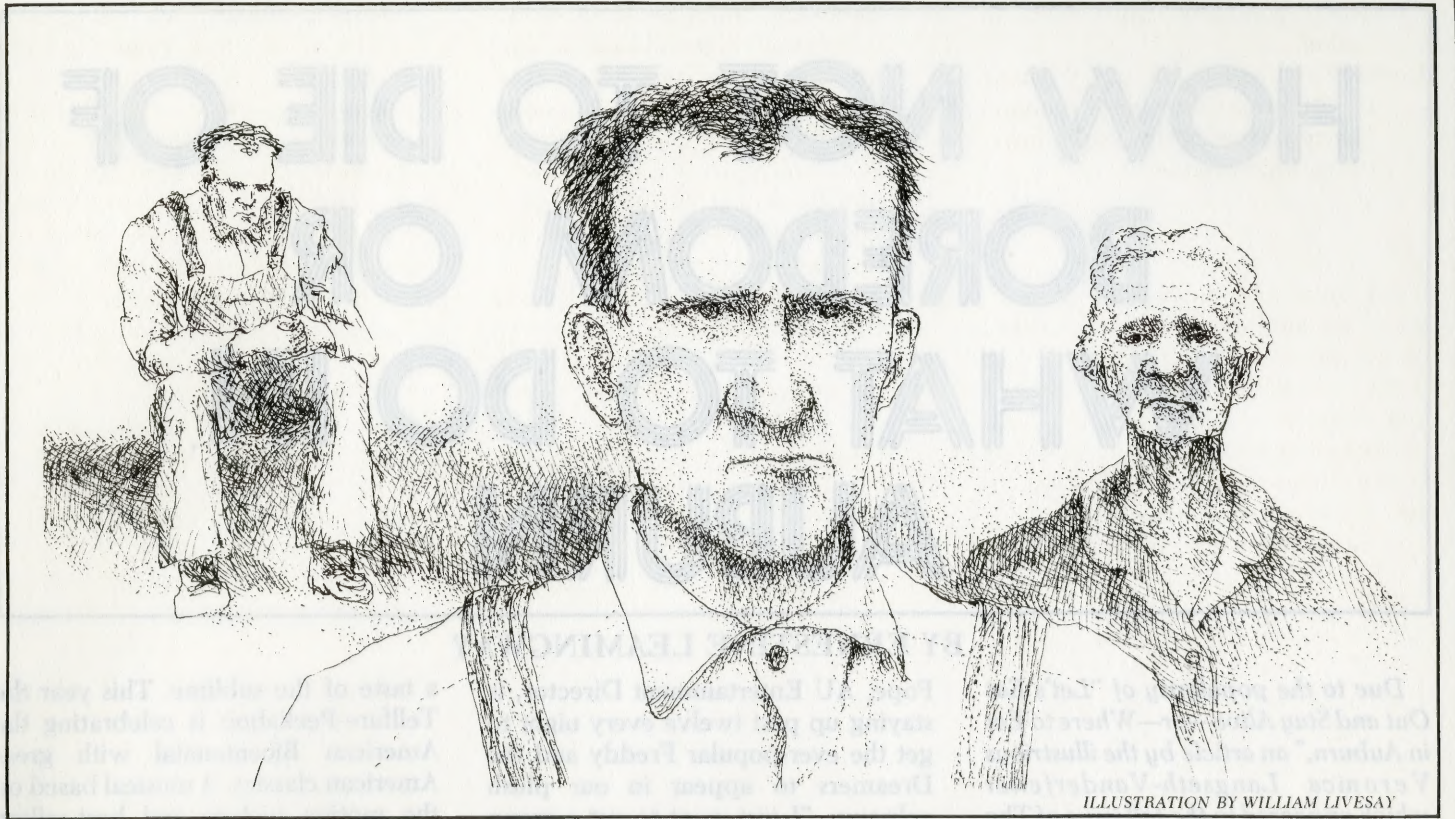


ILLUSTRATION BY WILLIAM LIVESAY

Retrospect

FICTION BY JORDAN SPENCER

Buddy was all Miss Lizzie Monroe had after Mister Ephriam died. I guess that was the reason she spoiled him so—that and he had had polio as a child and had to be petted so much then.

I always thought Buddy Monroe was the meanest man God ever made. He was Constable of Beat 6 when my daddy was Justice of the Peace, and I used to see him knock loud drunk folks in the head with his black jack right out in front of Daddy's store; Buddy called his black jack his "nigger knocker." I hated him even more when he fed me "Echo Spring" whiskey mixed with Coca-Cola when I was barely six years old and then laughed when I got all sweaty and went to sleep. He always called his wife Eunice "ole bitch" and told nasty stories about her which I didn't understand, but I knew they were nasty because Mama would turn red and

look at me, and Eunice would giggle and say, "Bud-deel!"

The folks around Springville said Buddy drove Miss Lizzie crazy with his drinking. I never believed she was crazy, though. She just acted like any other old lady to me—maybe even nicer. Every Christmas Miss Lizzie would send me divinity candy but Mama wouldn't let me eat it because the Monroe's house wasn't clean and she was sure the roaches had taken over their kitchen. Also, they picked their noses constantly—right out in public even. But every year I had to visit Miss Lizzie and tell her how much I enjoyed the divinity.

Buddy never mentioned his mama too much. Once, I remember, he brought back a potted plant which she had taken from our yard while we were on vacation. He apologized and said he just didn't understand why his mama did things like that. All she ever

stole was flowers out of somebody's yard or maybe a bottle of Avon sachet off of a dressing table somewhere. Daddy told Buddy it was all right, his mama meant no harm and we all knew it. Buddy got drunk that night and fell out the back door when he tried to throw his cigarette out. Later, Daddy drove Buddy home and brought back some cherry cordials in a paper napkin that Miss Lizzie sent me. Every one of them had been bitten.

For fifteen years I heard folks call Miss Lizzie a thief and Buddy a "one-sided nothing" because of his limp from the polio. But one night in late November Miss Lizzie died from hardened arteries. And Buddy Monroe sat down and cried.



HOW NOT TO DIE OF BOREDOM OR WHAT TO DO IN AUBURN

BY ERNESTINE LEAMINGWAY

Due to the popularity of "Let's Eat Out and Stay Alive—or—Where to Eat in Auburn," an article by the illustrious Veronica Langseth-Vanderfeller which appeared in the fall issue of The Auburn Circle, we are continuing the series with advice on activities in the Auburn area. The Circle is again fortunate in locating yet another well-known and accomplished local author, Ernestine Leamingway, to advise the adventurous. Ms. Leamingway, an intimate friend and half sister of Mrs. Langseth-Vanderfeller, is best known for her work as Activities Director for the Lee County Cattlebells. In 1971 she received the Henry J. Tibbs award for her book, The High Life of Bulls—or—How Green Was My Pasture. Currently Ms. Leamingway is not doing much of anything and is quite concerned about it.

Hi kids. Well, with football season gone, you athletic supporters may think Auburn is pretty "flushed out." Not so. Although the familiar toilet paper streamers no longer grace our lovely Tomber's Corner, you would be astounded at the varied and fascinating world of entertainment awaiting you (yes you), the Auburn student.

First let us consider the concert scene, always of the utmost concern, but especially important this time of year. Rumor has it that our own Hop

Pope, AU Entertainment Director, is staying up past twelve every night to get the ever-popular Freddy and the Dreamers to appear in our plush coliseum. "I just want to get a group that appeals equally to everybody on campus," explains Hop. "I was thinking of getting a Latin American group, because they are used to working in intense heat. I've been negotiating with the fire marshalls, and they have graciously consented to let the concert goers chew gum and talk during intermission."

For the culturally-inclined student, the Tellfare-Peekaboo Theater offers

a taste of the sublime. This year the Tellfare-Peekaboo is celebrating the American Bicentennial with great American classics. A musical based on the motion picture and best-selling novel *Jaws* will kick off the season. A special polyethylene tank is being constructed by the physics department for use in what must be the most ambitious dramatic production attempted in the East Alabama area in many a moon. Theater majors are all a-twitter speculating who will be the lucky actor or actress to play the part of the "Great White Killer." It is the opinion of many that a certain biology professor whose



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAN COOPER

name I am not at liberty to divulge will be perfect for the part.

Credit is also due the theater department for their imaginative casting attempts for the other productions this year. More hot campus rumor has it that top level talks are underway to get a certain scrappy freshman basketball player for the lead role in *The Godfather*. Top Tiger Davis has been reported as saying: "What the £*z&£!, so long as they don't hold dress rehearsal on my coliseum floor." In the final production of the season, Elrod McKuen, Auburn's own Poet Emeritus from Pinesap, Arkansas, will adapt the Civil War blockbuster *Gone With The Wind* for the AU stage. Of special note are the lifelike sets which theater majors have constructed. The burning of Atlanta spectacle is not to be missed! The one-show-only performance of this Southern classic will finish off this year's Tellfare-Pekaboo slate and theater. Seats near the door are advised.

If you're just out looking for a devil-may-care good time, your UPC (Unrehearsed Program Council) offers free movies shown twice nightly on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Caution: This is not the place to impress a heavy date. These movies seem to attract what you might call your baser elements of the community—i.e., Mag dorm residents, evangelical preachers, drug addicts, philosophy majors, fine arts majors, foreign students, engineering majors, zo majors, professors, graduate students, graduate teaching assistants, SGA senators, fraternity and sorority members, independents, co-op students, religious fanatics, atheists, Republicans, Democrats, child molesters, John Birchers, Birch Bayhers, canines, roaches, dirty ditty song singers, masochists, sadists, romanticists, psychopaths, and potential suicides. Besides, you've already seen the movies. Twice. Of course it doesn't really matter, what with the Langdon Hall technical crew's own special brand of interpretive projection. Cinema experts all extoll their special effects, particularly the "acid-trip" feeling you get at that special moment, usually at the dramatic climax of a showing, when they fade out the

sound and fiddle with the focus dial simultaneously.

The UPC also offers an impressive array of speakers each quarter for those of intellectual tastes. As my distinguished associate so aptly stated in the last issue of the *Circle*; "Think of it: Allen Funt, George Wallace, Christine Jorgenson, Vince Vance and the Valiants, Mindo the Magnificent, Muhammed Ali, and The Harlem Globetrotters—all the intellectual giants of our time have passed through the Loveliest Village of the Plains at one time or another." And great care is

registration a friend of mine got \$800 worth of benefits for standing in a line he later learned was for war orphans. Most Friday afternoons a delightful line forms on the sidewalk in front of the windows of Central Bunk on Tomber's Corner. Get a group together and form your own line! Line-standing is truly fun; I even know people who've gotten basketball tickets this way. (This, however, is one instance for which the line length to entertainment ratio does not hold. A second exception is War d'Eagle Cafeteria lines.) One warning,



taken to schedule the most exciting and stimulating speakers the night before big tests in your most difficult courses. If you should manage to break away for a night on the campus lecture circuit, remember: To fully appreciate a speaker, you must wait to arrive at the lecture two minutes before it begins. This practice allows one the opportunity to work out all those pent-up aggressions while fighting the Forum crowd for a seat.

If you're not into the more structured types of entertainment offered by the university, try finding a line and standing in it. On any given day you should be able to find at least one good line in or around campus. Remember, the longer the line, the better the thing for which you're waiting—once at

however: Beware of exceptionally long lines predominated by rowdy, frothing-at-the-mouth males; these lines always lead to the Tigger Theater on Thursday nights.

If you've got a few hours to kill, preferably on a Sunday afternoon, why not drop in on Harvey Pillpot? He loves to get visits from students either at his home or his office. If the secretary tells you he is out, try the arboretum. During student demonstrations the good Doctor can be found graciously holding court under the local Bo tree, dispensing pearls of wisdom for anyone who will listen.

Speaking of demonstrations, whatever happened to student riots and other meaningful mass activities like panty raids, cramming into telephone booths, pep rallies, and

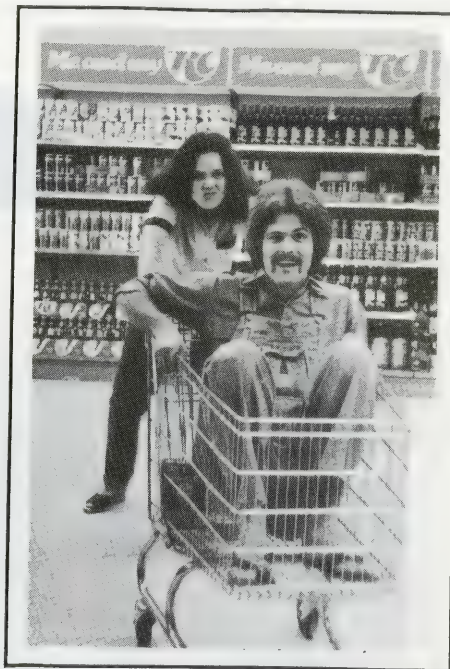
streaking? Join a movement and put a little action into your life. The only mass activity I've seen lately occurred when an unfortunate but attractive blonde coed in Elementary Education signed up for an Electrical Engineering course by mistake (they both begin with an E, don't they?). Several engineering majors and one disoriented psychology professor were injured in the onslaught to sign up for the course. Come on gang, we can do better than that. How about a food fight in the cafeteria protesting hard rolls and lumpy mashed potatoes? Or we could form a circle of bodies around University Bookshop and chant, "You've just saved money. Jay & Em used books cost less."

For those of you who enjoy a good, active sport, but don't quite go in for radical politics, may I suggest a challenging little game I call "Turkey Scoot." The object of the game is to see how many pedestrians you can knock down with your car. Naturally, the best places for the novice Scooter to practice are the major intersections near the Concourse, in front of Parker Hall, and near the women's dorms on the Hill. A good scoring system goes like this: Ordinary pedestrians = +1; bicyclers = -2 (too easy); pre-med majors = +2 (public nuisances); freshman history professors = +3 (public enemies); wheel chair riders = +5 (kinkiness counts); and B & G men = +10 (very rare, almost never seen during working hours).

For the advanced Turkey Scooter, a challenging and dangerous variation is substituting a bicycle for the car. At this point the player is forced simultaneously into defensive as well as offensive position on the playing field; a good sportsman is usually not in too much peril, however, at least not from experienced Scooters, because of the punitive score for hitting bicyclers. All in all, it's a great way to spend the end of the quarter, especially Dead Day!

If collegiate entertainment doesn't get it on for you, perhaps your tastes are a little more cosmopolitan. It just so happens that there are about as many fun things to do in and around the city of Auburn as there are on campus.

The chief attractions in the loveliest village can be summed up in three words: movies, movies, movies. We in Auburn are blessed with three big luxurious motion picture theaters. If you missed the latest run of Jeremiah Johnson at the Village, don't be upset, because it will be on at the War Eagle for at least three more weeks. If worse comes to worst you can catch it at the Auburn Drive-In, which is situated down on what natives call "the Strip." One advantage of waiting to see popular films at the Drive-In is that while



there you will also get to take in the edifying true-life documentaries which are standard fare there. My favorites are *The Swinging Waitresses*, *Free, Fearless, and Fifteen*, and *I Was a Teenage Hermaphrodite*.

If you've never ventured out in that direction, you may not have realized that there are simply scads of exciting places to go on the Strip. The Roller Rink, preferred by Auburn jetsetters for generations, is THE place to go for the thrill of victory and the agony of the feet, as the case may be. Within short walking (or skating) distance, Torbett's Salad Bar is the perfect place to go afterwards for refreshment, and the Torbett management kindly provides storage for patrons' Roller Derby Royals. If you prefer a less strenuous form of entertainment, things are always rolling at the bowling alley, too.

Some of my more explorative friends and I enjoy spending the third Friday and alternate Wednesday nights of each month (except February when we go every night) at Super Vittles. Some of our suggestions for having fun there: Try sticking your head in the meat freezer (really, it's quite exhilarating). Try to guess how long the meat has been there. You may want to choose a special cut of meat, for instance pork chops, and note such things as their position in the freezer, how many of them there are on a given night, and so forth. Go up to one of the clerks and ask for rock salt; they never keep enough rock salt. Help the sack boys load groceries. Suggest that the stock boys alternate arrangements of the Dixie cups to lend a more pleasing aesthetic effect. Squeeze the fruit, if you're into that sort of thing. Advise the shoppers. Ask to examine one of the watches in the display case near the front door.

A good friend of mine in horticulture got in the habit of hanging out in the plant section. She developed favorites over a period of time and even watered plants when they were looking peaked. She got emotionally involved with a handsome young gardenia and later purchased the plant; they lived happily ever after (except for his parents' disapproval).



The washateria on Gay Street right next to Super Vittles is one of my favorite recreation spots. Everyone knows that a washateria is a great place to meet fascinating people, but if you're trapped there alone at night with no one to rap with, there are still many ways to amuse yourself: Check empty dryers. One Saturday night a friend of mine found over thirty unmatched socks this way. More than one lonely male student has been saved from paralyzing depression by the thrill of finding a lost article of clothing, specifically some careless coed's undergarment—don't ask me why, girls. If you're not a lonely male, try picking off the lint that infested

your wool sweaters when you washed them in a machine some guy just used to wash his bathmat. Pick lint off sweaters that don't have lint. And, if the boredom becomes unbearable, cram your underwear in the same machine with your jeans and use the extra thirty-five cents in the pinball machines next door.

Finally, one can simply walk across the campus on a dull Friday or Saturday night, watching the bank time and temperature sign go off on Tomber's Corner, waiting for the traffic lights to be switched to flashing reds and yellows, and pausing to gain inspiration from the industrious architecture student who live in Biggin Dormitory.

But at long last, if all else fails, you may be forced by desperation to sink to the one final option available to the Auburn student—studying. This practice, however, should be avoided at all costs; it is widely known to severely limit the development of a well-rounded personality.

In conclusion, many options are available to an industrious Auburn student. Seize life by the throat and live your college years for all they are worth! Remember, you only go around once in life. . . .



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAN COOPER

THE OLDEST PROFESSIONAL

Come in, come in. I must apologize;
These tears that you see streaming from my eyes
Are those of joy and not the ones of woe.
Please have a seat, I'll soon begin the show.
Just let me rest a minute, joy can be
A very tiring thing for one like me:
A dedicated servant to your will—
Oh, by the way, about your last week's bill....

—Danny Adams

The NIGHT ESTELLE COLSON LEFT NEW ORLEANS

FICTION BY SKIP BISHOP

Any hard working man would have marveled at the sight of all that good whiskey. There it sat; a whole card table full, just waiting to provide the entertainment at the best damn going away party to hit the lower French Quarter since Randolph O'Leary's wake. There was rum there that had the fancy label just like on the picture advertisement lining the walls of city bus number thirteen that made its hourly stops in front of the Central Hotel which, by the way, wasn't a bad place to live. It was also the place where the big party was just beginning to warm the early fall chill.

Who could believe it? Estelle Colson, after all these years of residing in number six and putting out the best seafood gumbo the Coffee Pot Spot will ever know, went and announced she's getting married and moving all the way to Valdosta. Plenty reason for a party! So all the tenants at the Central Hotel were giving their last loving good-byes to the girl who could warm a working Cajun's heart as well as that stew.

The dim light in the room of David Odell didn't bother the group at all. Occasionally, someone would bump the bulb that hung a touch low on its

twisted cord, and the whole room would sway in its pale yellowness. The smell of staleness and dried urine was much too familiar to the group to affect the festive atmosphere of Estelle's bon voyage, and to top off the appearance of Mr. Odell's abode, he had swept up all the chips of tile that had worked loose during the dancing lessons that afternoon. David Odell was quite a dancer, and tonight the conditions were right for him to prove just that.

Estelle was having her first bourbon and coke when the toast was proposed.

"To pretty little Estelle Colson," began James Byron, who incidentally had the largest paper route in the French Quarter, "who for years now has graced us here at Central with her charm and now is movin' far from us to become Mrs. uh . . . Who are you gonna be, Estelle?"

"Freedmon, Lawrence Freedmon is the gentleman's name. He owns a boat store, and keeps a passel of boats inside it, too."

"Rich, is he?" David's date croaked from the corner. She wasn't much to listen to, but she was his best student

and sometimes spent the entire evening at Mr. Odell's.

"Oh yes," Estelle replied religiously.

The conversation was lost in the music from the portable hi-fi that chimed out the tunes reserved for such celebrations. The liquor soon overcame the smells and sounds of the busy street below where Estelle would shortly start her journey to the Greyhound bus station. David was strutting at his finest, and every gent there had a farewell fox-trot with Estelle. Jokes were told and vile social errors were committed. Manny Sutton got too drunk to stand on her pink high-heels and fell, spilling her drink on the borrowed sequined dress. The incident, like all others that fine evening, was passed off as fun, in honor of Estelle Colson.

As the evening whisked away, speech was beginning to slur, but the conversation became more intriguing. Everyone's affairs were discussed until they ran out of Coke to mix with the Old Crow. There was plenty of Dr. Pepper on hand though, to handle the emergency.

"Estelle, where'd you meet this Mr. Freedmon?" As usual, Manny had to get all the details because sometimes she would use these actual true-to-life cases for her next story she'd send to *Modern Romance* magazine. Six years ago they paid her twenty-five dollars for one of her best.

"Oh, you know, on my last trip up to see my sister in Valdosta was where I met him. It was love at first sight for both of us, he told me."

Manny continued to pry. "Well lord a goodness, Estelle, wasn't that trip almost over a year ago? How come you just telling us about this fella? Did he ask you to get married all the way back then?"

"No, Manny. You see, he wrote me a letter, and a long one at that; almost four pages. It come last week, you see, and that's when we decided to make it permanent, you see."

David Odell, who was seeing things with an amber tint now, said, "Estelle, honey, I don't recall delivering you no letter last week." Mr. Odell got five bucks off his monthly rent for performing that service.

"My letter from the gentleman came

to the Coffee Pot Spot. That's why you didn't see it, you see, don't ya?"

Again the conversation trailed off to the sound of David Odell's date vomiting out the window. The incident was good for a few laughs, but lost its humor the second time around. Time was passing and everyone knew Estelle would be leaving the Central Hotel soon.

After a few last fox-trots and good-bye kisses and slaps on the behind Estelle adjusted her clothes, touched up her make-up, and picked up her suitcase by the door. She said good-bye and proceeded down the stairs. The party escorted her as far as the top, and sadly, very sadly, watched her descend to the street below.

It was Sunday and city bus number thirteen wasn't running. She didn't mind walking to the Greyhound bus station; she did just that quite often. She liked it there. The little doughnut shop in the back was comforting after work. A lot of the late shift workers

met there to unwind. Estelle always told her friends at the Central Hotel what a warm place it was, and now it stood for friendship because the Trailways people had moved in the same building and they got along fine with the Greyhound folks.

As she walked she thought about how late it was and what kind of wait she would have. Manny had given her three old copies of *True Romance*, but she thought that they should be saved for the trip itself instead of the wait. The traffic light that was serving no particular purpose changed from green to amber to red as Estelle passed under it. She noticed that that thing must be pretty darn powerful to make everything in the area seem to change colors, too. And golly, the sound it made when it changed. She wondered why they made them louder at night. That click-clack every time it changed colors had to be there to awaken sleepy drivers, she thought.

When she arrived at the Greyhound

bus station, she didn't head for the doughnut shop as usual. She just found her a seat on the long wooden bench and began to fish in her purse for her ticket. She had wisely purchased it the night before in case she was late and the bus would just be pulling out when she got there. She also had cleverly hidden it in the October issue of *True Romance* that Manny had given her.

Estelle was used to this procedure because every year she tried to make it to Valdosta to her sister and the kids. It was exactly one year ago when Lawrence Freedmon had stopped and given her a ride when she was walking to her sister's from the Valdosta bus station. He was such a kind, smart man. With that big car and fancy clothes, Estelle thought, he could have had any woman in the world. Estelle knew that he was just as happy about meeting her as she was at meeting him because he had told her later that night, or was it early that next morning.

A mechanical, polished voice rang



ILLUSTRATION BY RACHEL McALLISTER

out through the station: "Attention, please. Greyhound coach number twenty-six with stops in Pascagoula, Mobile, Dothan, Valdosta, Atlanta, and Brunswick is now loading at gate five. Passengers reclaim your seats. Departure is in fifteen minutes. All aboard, please."

Estelle sat for a few minutes to let those other people get on first, which she always did and considered it noble. She again thought back a year to the fine restaurant and the good wine that was all part of that evening. Mr. Freedmon had told her that the convention was always held in Atlanta and he always spent the night before in Valdosta. Later on after more good wine they decided to meet in that same motel the next year and they would get married. She never forgot the next morning, lying there alone, because

Mr. Freedmon of course had to leave early to make the first meeting of his convention, and finding the fifty dollars he left her. The note said it was for the taxi, but she knew it didn't cost nearly that much and he was just being nice.

Yes, Estelle Colson was going to like living in Valdosta. Besides, the bus station there was much more modern and there were a good many more trees in the city than in the lower French Quarter. She would be able to see her sister every day if she wanted now, and there would be no more seafood gumbo stains on her best dresses.

The clear voice came again: "Attention, please. Greyhound coach number twenty-six with stops in Pascagoula, Mobile, Dothan . . ."

Estelle thought as she boarded the bus that it smelled of exhaust and stale

chewing gum, but that the voice of the bus announcer was very pleasant. Much like Lawrence Freedmon's voice. She fished out the issue of *True Romance* and settled back.

Back in the Central Hotel in the lower French Quarter, Manny Sutton's borrowed sequined dress was pulled all up around her knees and twisted as she lay sprawled across the corner of the kitchen floor, next to the stove where ants were feasting on bits of lost food. David Odell was lying on his bed with the last of the rum from the fancy bottle. Just before he lost consciousness he managed to mouth his own private little toast:

"Goddamnit, Estelle Colson, it'll never be the same without ya' here . . . Estelle . . . Goddamn ya' . . ."



DAYDREAM QUEEN

I'm the gaze-out-the-window-daydream-queen.
And when the others find someone like I have now
Perhaps they'll know what I mean.
For Love and I have never met like this—
The all-day-I-think-about-you,
 can't-sleep-without,
 eat-without,
 do-without-you-close-Love.
Gentle, honest, caring, sharing, ever-growing
You are my Love.
And I'm the gaze-out-the-window-daydream-queen.

—Cathy Ellis

WEATHER REPORT

"later this morning
gray clouds are expected to wound
the robin's-egg sky/
the temperature will begin to fall
like a smooth stone
through still water/
and snowflurries should begin.

"this afternoon
beneath a gun-barrel sky
you will begin to jump around
and blow into your cupped palms.
your footprints
should fill with snow
in a matter of minutes.

"by nightfall
the drifts will have reached
the eaves of your shelter/
you'll be running out
of furniture to burn/
soon the temperature of your heart
should be approaching
that point when all
molecular motion ceases—
absolute zero."

—A. J. Wright

HE BE SO NICE

i knew a boy
from Big Cove Road
i liked the way
his mustache grewed

i sidled up
to tell him so
and now he takes me
where he go

—Martha Duggar

CONFESSIONS OF A MOONSHINER

BY TOM HAGOOD

*My daddy he made whiskey;
My granddaddy he did too.
We ain't paid no whiskey tax
since 1792.*

—(An old song)

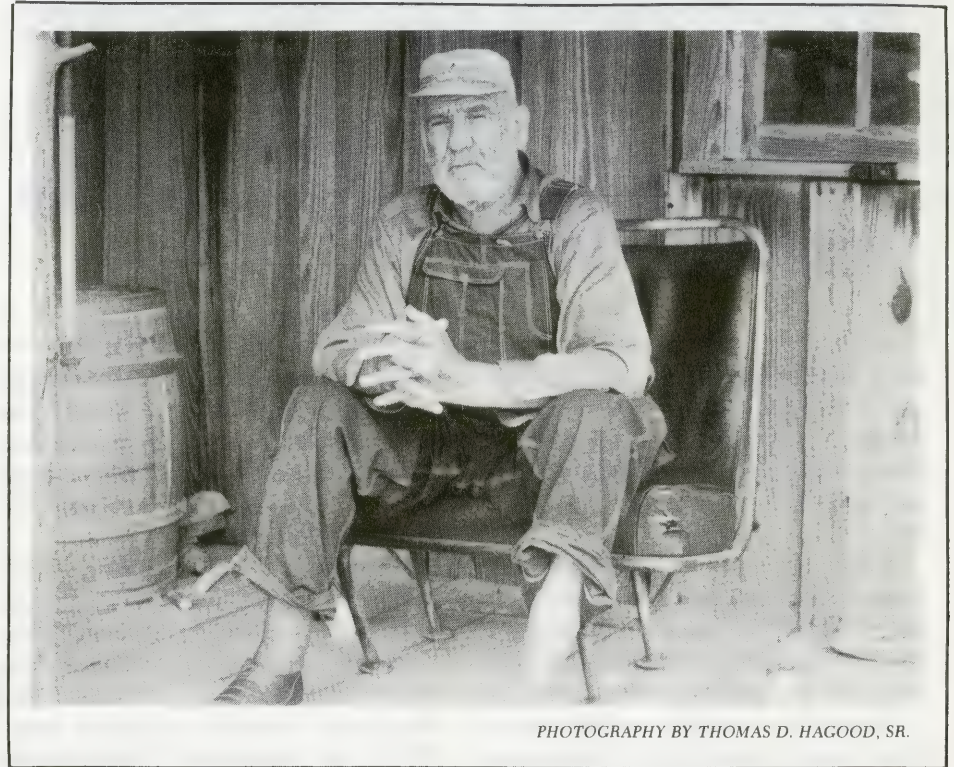
It was a cold October morning. A thin layer of fog hung close to the ground, bringing a steady drizzle with it. As I got into the car I was beginning to have second thoughts. I had wanted to talk to an "old time moonshiner," so a mutual friend had arranged a confidential interview with the old man. But what would I ask him; how would he interpret my interest in his trade?

I knew him by his reputation. He was retired now, making his living trading hunting dogs at local "flea markets." He was said to be honest and open about his former trade, and to take some pride in it.

Following the directions I had been given, I turned off the blacktop at the little country store. The tires hummed steadily against the wet road as I drove past browning fields of corn and clapboard country houses. As I neared his house, I spotted him walking toward his barn with a long-eared hound dancing and squirming at his feet.

As I turned into the driveway the tires squealed, alerting the other dogs; they responded with a resonant howl. They were already at the car door when I stepped out. I was relieved to see that their tails started to wag as they sniffed me out. His house was not at all what I had expected. For one thing, it was too well kept: freshly painted and neat. Behind it stood a huge red barn which dwarfed the little house.

As he stepped from behind the barn, the dogs ran obediently to him. He was



PHOTOGRAPHY BY THOMAS D. HAGOOD, SR.

heavy-set but not fat; he wore a red plaid shirt with overalls and a yellow cap. His face was firm, clean cut, and windburned.

He waved and yelled, as he directed the long-eared hound into the barn, "Be with you in a minute." When he came out again we shook hands. "Now what was it you wanted to talk to me about?" he asked, eyeing my tape recorder as we walked toward the house. Clearing my throat, I said, "Uh, well, uh, I wanted to find out about moonshining." He laughed and invited me inside.

As I sat down, he said with a deep, raspy voice, "Well, I couldn't tell you all about it cause I've been at it too long. Since I moved to Sand Mountain in '47, I've farmed a little, bootlegged a little, raised a few cows, done a little of everything and all such as that. I've had

me some good days and some bad ones."

When I asked him to tell me where and how he got started moonshining, he thought a minute, pushed his cap up further on his brow, and rubbed his chin as if in deep contemplation. "Now I started a-making moonshine in Georgia on a little copper still; that was altogether different than what they do now. Today most of them makes it on what they call a 'ground hog still.' I wouldn't even know how to run one of them."

When I asked him if things had changed much since then, he slapped his knees hard with the palms of both hands and bent double in laughter.

"Why, a man ain't got a chance in Georgia now. When I was out there, there was only two policemen and both of them was old. Every two or



PHOTOGRAPHY BY THOMAS D. HAGOOD, SR.

three years, the federals would come out of Atlanta, but there was always someone a-watching the courthouse. When they come, the word would be out, and no one would go near their still.

"Yeah, we made it and hauled it, done everything that could be mentioned about it, back in them hard days. We wasn't just a-making it for the fun of it. We made it to buy bread."

He smiled as he told me that he had never been picked up for bootlegging or moonshining while he lived in Georgia. "I outrun 'em a few times but never got caught. Back then I run pretty good, and I always stayed ahead."

Scratching his chin, he continued, "I out-sharped some of 'em, and some of 'em I didn't. But I always out-sharped 'em just enough to make some money."

He told me that he quit moonshining and "just bootlegged" when he moved to Alabama. He was the middleman, buying it from those who made it and selling it himself for a profit. Since moving, he has been arrested many times.

Shaking his head, he said, "I've been caught many a time in Alabama, not just three or four but many a time. I've been locked up twice in one day. Yeah, that was sort of a rough one. Locked me up in the morning, I got out, and they had me locked up again before evening."

"Oh, yeah," he sighed, still shaking his head. "Been in several different jails, not just this 'un in Marshall County. I've been in 'em from Athens, Georgia, to over as far as Huntsville. Scattered that far."

His wife had been working quietly at the stove, but when the conversation lagged, she came to my rescue—"Why don't you tell him how much time you've had to serve?" she asked, as if that were a matter of some pride. "Well," he answered, "I never had to serve a sentence down at the jail or the penitentiary. I've been locked up, but I always made my bail and paid my fine."

He scratched his head and chuckled. "I've sold many a gallon; sold it by the hundred gallons, the gallon, the pint, and by the drink." He smiled and slapped his thigh. "I've sold a heap of it, just to be fair, I've sold a sight of it. Made some good money. The law 'ud catch me, and I'd pay my fine and go back, start again and sell some more."

Of all the tricks he used to "out-sharp" the law, he told me he was proudest of the way he hid his whiskey. "I used to have a stash up there on that hill," he said, pointing out the window. "No sooner would I hide it than the law would come and start hunting for it. I kept it up there for over sixteen years, and they 'ud hunt for it sometimes three or four times a week.

They never did find it long as I bootlegged.

"I had a big hole in the ground—covered it up with sod over it. The cows would graze over it and everything else. The law never could figure out where I hid it. Used to make 'um so mad they'd come down here and threaten me, tell me that they'd git my farm if I didn't quit."

He explained that moonshiners have sort of a mutual dependency on each other. "You see, if one moonshiner sees something, why he'll tell the other real quick. That's what makes it a little hard for 'em to get caught. I've had several of 'em to call me and tell me to clean out cause the law was headed my way."

His wife interrupted, "Why don't you tell him about the time the federals got you." "Yeah," he said, "My last year I sold a lot of whiskey. I even sold a federal twenty gallons. I loaded it up for 'em, and when they paid me for it I recognized it was a federal. I came in and said to my wife, 'Well, they done caught me.' 'What do you mean?' she said. 'That was a federal man in that car,' I said. She said, 'Ah, surely it wasn't.' I said, 'You just wait, we'll hear from it. Six months later they came and got me. Rounded up fifty-three of us that time,'" he said, managing a faint smile. He had to pay the largest fine of his career and managed to get off without having to serve a sentence.

He admitted that selling twenty gallons to "a federal" was a humbling experience but denied that it had anything to do with his decision to retire a short time later: "I just decided to quit, but they didn't make me quit. So, since I quit, I've been in the dog business, swapping dogs and selling dogs," he said.

"I have a heap of fun with them dogs—trading, buying, and a-selling, doing anything I can just to make a dollar."

But as for moonshining: "Sugar and everything else is so high, you know, anybody that wants to work at all can get a job and make more money than he can a-fooling with whiskey."





PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID BRADFORD

SCOTT

Scott,
 You looked handsome
 Sitting cross-legged
 In front of the red-hot heater
 With
 The silhouette of your strong face
 And neck sloping downward to broad shoulders
 Covered in bare skin
 Rocking, swaying back and forth and around
 Listening to your country songs
 With your head tilted upward
 To catch the ultimate sound.

—Rebecca Mauldin

TORMENT

smashing, clashing
 defying whatever is there
 waves push against sand and rocks

soft, slow
 submissive
 waves sulk back out to sea
 regain force and try again

—Janice Bickham



ILLUSTRATION BY GINNY McCRARY

mother

FICTION BY BARBARA BALL

She stood in front of the dresser, absently following with her fingertip the tracery of worm-paths in the wood, and surveying her reflection in the mirror. The dresser had become hers at her grandmother's death, and she had refinished it herself, on nights after the kids were in bed and during carefully hoarded hours while the two oldest were in school and the young one was asleep. It never matched the glossy-bright pictures in the magazines, the captions of which told her that she could be creative if she followed the easy directions found on the box of Continental Matchmakers Refinishing Kits. But she felt a certain pride and attachment for the massive, newly beechwood-stained dresser. She had done it; it was hers. The dresser dominated the medley of furniture pieces in the room: the double bed she'd had for thirteen years now, since she was twelve, in which she used to giggle with her best friend; the rocking chair where she'd been rocked by her own mother; and the hope chest she'd been given at fourteen, in which she'd stored sheets with crocheted edges and cup towels.

These minutes in which she stood before the mirror were seized from an unexpected lull; the children were playing quietly in the small apartment living room. She studied the reflection of her face. It was a small, oval face with fair skin and blue eyes, eyes which never seemed, these past months, to lose their tiredness. It was a pretty face, one which her grandfather used to pinch, affectionately, teasingly, between his thumb and the knuckle of his forefinger, saying, "Ah, sweet, if I were a boy again..." She leaned forward and scrutinized the crow's feet looming at the corners of her eyes, then shook her head quickly and straightened her body. She smiled suddenly, and pushed her blonde hair up, from her neck and shoulders to the

top of her head, where its curls lolled lazily over her hands. The orange-warmed late afternoon light that came in at the window softened the tired lines of her face. The reflection pleased her, and she stood looking at it for several minutes.

"Whatcha doing, Mommy?"

Mommy drew her stomach in around the tightness that came there and bit her lip against her irritation.

"Ginny—"

She bent and picked up the child. She felt the compact rib-ladders under her hands; the small aliveness of the five-year-old body uncoiled her tightness a little. She sat down in the rocking chair, cradling Ginny, her cheek resting on the top of the little girl's head, and rocked silently. Her eyes grew somber and unfocused; Ginny, discomfited by her mother's distance, squirmed down after a few minutes and ran back to the living room. Her mother watched her go and felt the muscles of her body go taut again. She leaned back and rocked, faster than before.

She dropped a plastic bag of frozen crayon-green turnip greens into the boiling water and reached to turn the hamburger patties. She jerked her hand back, like a marionette pained, when the pins of hot grease hit it. The shuffling of child-size saddle oxfords and a high sing-song reminded her that Ginny was setting the table—setting it in her own idiosyncratic way, but setting it nonetheless.

"Why are we having turnip greens again?"

"You'll damn well eat them. You need green vegetables."

Andy's eyes widened as the six-year-old recognized a word that was not part of polite usage.

"Go help your sister."

"Setting the table's girls' work."

"Get your tail over there and put the glasses around."

Andy was mollified by being given a job that made use of his six-year-old superiority and masculine dexterity; he carried the glasses importantly, all four of them pressed against his chest.

"Hi, Honey."

Her husband of seven years pulled her shoulder to his chest, briefly and perfunctorily, and touched his lips to the top of her head.

"How was your day?" she asked quietly.

"Okay. Hey, Andy, fella, come here and give me a hug."

She turned and pushed at the frozen bag of turnip greens, breaking up their hardness so that they would cook faster.

She chopped a hamburger patty into small, child-edible pieces and spooned slices of canned peaches over the enameled scenes of the three bears. She set the dish on the highchair tray in front of the little one, and sat down in her own chair.

"Andy, say the blessing, please."

"Godsgreatgodsgood. Lettuce-thankemforarfood. Mem."

She watched Karen out of the corner of her eye. Karen was exploring the feel of a peach as she pushed it around the inside of her mouth with her tongue; peach dribbled on her chin. Her mother watched, her hand starting up several times, almost involuntarily, to guide the spoon. She stayed her hand; Karen was eighteen months old and could learn to feed herself.

She herself ate little. She nudged the turnip greens idly in various directions on her plate.

"You need green vegetables. Eat your turnip greens," Andy ordered his mother.

"Andy—"

"Don't tell your mother what to do, Andy."

She looked up at her husband's sudden chivalry; he had gone back to earnest consumption of his hamburger. She sighed and shook her head.

The dishes were washed. Her husband and Andy and Ginny were in the living room; Karen was asleep. She stood silently in front of the mirror, rubbing the edge of the dresser hard with her thumb. The room was dark, and the pale reflection of her face looked ghost-like. She touched her cheek gingerly with her fingertips, exploring the hollows and roundnesses of her face as if discovering its reality. She tucked a stray strand of hair behind her ear.

The overhead light came on, startling her. Her stomach jumped and she put a hand there to quiet it.

"Hey—I just came back here to find my cigarettes. What are you doing in here in the dark?"

"Larry, I—"

He was fumbling through newspapers on top of the hope chest.

"Yeah?"

"Larry, I went to the doctor this morning."

"Oh? Anything wrong?"

His voice, edged with a new concern, came to her from under the bed, where he was looking for his cigarettes.

"Yeah—Ah, Larry...I'm pregnant."

"Hey, listen, are you sure that's healthy? I mean, this is pretty soon after Karen."

She bit her lip and grasped for words, and then said nothing.

"Well, look—don't worry. Things are going good for me right now, and we can afford another baby. Don't worry, OK?"

"Larry—"

He came around the edge of the bed to put his hands on her shoulders.

"Hey, now listen, Honey—It'll be OK. I always wanted a big family. You feeling OK—nauseated or anything?"

"No—I mean, yes, I'm OK."

"Good," he said, and kissed the top of her head.

PROGRESS FOR A POET

Ride with a puritan mind, for progress
Is by will the way to your truth
And truth for those you master
With forced words that must come
Like air to the lungs of an athlete
Running for a name finer than his own.
Do not out-range the brain or mind
Searching for the soul, nonsense of forms.
Expound wonder of subtle sounds, emotions
You create that grab and trick the minds
Of men who would wonder at the images
Conceived by your hard earned mental mint.
And safe in love you can never lose,
Your heart will reason what it may choose.

—Percy Jones

REFLECTION IN A BROKEN MIRROR

The days are unmomentous
Falling into one another
Like a row of dominoes.

New beginnings have such fragile wings
Translucent in the air,
And endings—often—
Sweep the house too clean
As walking through the hallway
The feet can stir no dust
And only silent laughter
Resounds off empty walls.

Here a broken mirror
And there a vacant pane
No clock upon the bureau
To single out the days

. . . still, echoes of the ticking left inside
Where shadows of the living still abide:
Half-images in a broken-
Mirror's strain.

—Carol Danner



-Circle Travel Guide-

Student Holiday in Mexico

In light of numerous complaints that *The Auburn Circle* is too literary in its approach to student creativity, and in the interest of broadening the horizons of the average Auburn student, the *Circle* hereby undertakes the first in a series of photo essays examining vacation hideaways. In order to make this report more relevant to the average student out in the real world, we dredged the mainstream of campus life until we found a qualified candidate who had recently returned from an extensive tour of Mexico:

Circle: Could you fill us in on the background of your travels?

Student: I dropped out of school for a quarter to see the world. I felt that the university environment was too restricting. You know, stifling my creativity and all. So I decided that I would head for Mexico. It's a rugged country—a real challenge when you're so used to the comforts of civilization.

Circle: How long were you there?

Student: Three days.

Circle: Did you hitchhike?

Student: No, I took a tour. One I got from Wanderlust tours. It was cheap. They had one that went to three towns for the same price and same number of days, but I wanted to get to know just

one place instead of skipping around.

Circle: What town did you settle in?

Student: It had a Spanish name and was on the beach. A lot of Indians had lived there, like Mayas.

Circle: Did you get a chance to know the local people?

Student: Yeah, we had a cute maid at the hotel, and our tour director was Mexican. His name was Pedro and he was a hoot, pinching girls and all.

Circle: What sights did you visit?

Student: They were all Indian names. I've got some pictures. I just picked them up from the drugstore today.



#1: I took this one from the hotel window. That sign made me feel right at home. I took both of them the first morning. We barely finished lunch before the first tour started.



#2: This was the hotel. I took it from the bus. Those people in the street are Mexicans.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRAD HALL



#3: This is at the gates of the temple. That's Pedro pointing at a statue of an Indian sacrifice. The priest's holding a heart in his hand. I think they cut their heads off, too.



#4: This is a picture of the pyramid. At the top is where they did the sacrificing. I wish I had gotten the top of it, but those lines on the instamatic only show up when the lights are just right.



#5: Here's the top without the bottom. That fellow on the right and me got drunk every night at the hotel. He was a million laughs.



#6: This is an altar or something, but I've forgotten what was on it.



#7: This was an old pyramid, but they didn't restore it. It's just like they found it. I didn't like that one too much. It's got two snakes on top.

Circle: Is that it? Where are the rest of the pictures?

Student: Well, actually I took a whole roll. The other five are in the envelope, but they aren't nearly as good. I knew you'd only want to see the cream of the crop.

Circle: I see. Well, on the basis of your experience, do you have any final

words of wisdom for any other Auburn students who may follow in your footsteps?

Student: Yeah, I'd say the most important thing is to keep a sense of perspective about the whole thing. You know, it was a great trip and all, and everybody should have the experience of roughing it like that, but you gotta be careful to remember that

you are an American and that you have to hold on to your American traditions. After all, you know, we can't take the water and the food they serve down there nearly as well as they can. Even the tequila seemed stronger. But it's a great way to broaden your horizons.



LETTER

I start out writing my day's history.
Include the pinus leaf pricking my foot,
Mention the fallen members of the genus Ulmus
With their exposed xylem and phloem.
I must add that the twig I am enclosing
Is twelve years old,
As determined from the bud scale scars.
Next comes the "good old days" paragraph,
Then the family news,
The weather,
And contemporary issues.
To find a conclusion I must choose
Between a remark about the cute kitty
You have never seen
(and therefore could not begin to understand),
Or some other witty statement
About my life.
All the description in the world
(first paragraph included),
Could never start to give you a picture
Of how things are now.
Worse yet, I close with the "I love you."
I pretend you are as real today as you once were.

—Linda McKnight

THE SATIE RECORD (A SCRATCH)

CUBISM

a fractured nude descends the mind's stair

DADA

a virgin microbe interviewed upon the street

SURREALISM

the razor blade across the eye

PARIS

when love was more occasion than equation

when ladies' jewels danced

lambent in the gas-light's

glow.

Me in a top hat and white gloves for style

A gold-tipped cane, a semaphore smile

(A trace of elegance for a while)

typewriters tick tack ticking

bang bang

such ecstasy born of newspaper print

take my arm, let us saunter

beneath the silhouetted Eiffel Tower

O Madame

our anarchies shall rival Ravachol's

for there are explosives in love

more powerful than any powder

Come, you be the bomb

And I the fuse

What night our kiss

Shall then refuse?

The Countess d'Orgel expects us at the ball

Salon poets recite

tonight

For we two alone beneath the Parisian moon

pipe-cleaner heads spin

smiling

down on our scandalous parade

and I know that love is a very private circus

for clowns like you and me

beneath stars that ta-rah-rah boom-tee-a.

—John Sellers

reflections

FICTION BY JANICE BICKHAM

I was afraid of him. It was a cold fear—not the kind when one fears poverty or loneliness, but a fear of the godawful, the sin of maniacs.

His unusual appearance distinguished him. The tall, lean, and irregular form was clothed in stretch shirts which emphasized the drooping shoulders, twisting arms, and concave waist. He carried this form like a giant—slowly, first one foot and then the other. Dark hair hung in limp strands around his shoulders, while it receded on his forehead, giving his Roman nose a prominent position. His eyes were sunk in hollow darkness. He was the embodiment of all horrid things, real or exaggerated, that a mother warns a child of.

I first saw him sitting on a cement table in the park—a vulture waiting for the dead-live bodies of children. If he sat for weeks he might see one or two victims at the most. The park is located in an old section where spinsters, aging couples, and churches deteriorate. There are no children. I am the youngest inhabitant and I am older than my years.

After work when the days are warm, I often tarry in the quiet of the long ago playground, trying to recapture a childhood I never had. That day I did not stop.

I think how strange that one sees the same person again and again after the first recognition. How many times before were they there unseen? Why is it that chance shows me one person and not the other when it is another I want to see? I do not know, but this person found a place in my life.

The second time I saw him was a few days later, maybe a week, I'm not sure, I quit counting time, but it was a Wednesday. My religion centers on a small Episcopal group that gathers on Wednesday nights to discuss all strange things in the Bible. That night I was walking home from such a

meeting. I believe if one walks straight and quick enough no one will stop him. I walk so because my path is through the town that has subsided into storehouses, drugstores, and cheap cafes. That night I was occupied with thoughts of strange tongues and did not walk straight and fast. My eyes caught the bobbing light of the juke box and I peered in the window at the lights behind the blinking cafe sign. He sat at the front table staring blankly back at me. Then, as if by recognition, he raised his arm to motion me in. His hand was long, bony, feminine—very delicate, somewhat out of place. Startled, I noticed the nails were stained black. Fascinated, I followed the circular motion of the hand—once, twice, and then it again rested on the table near the silverware. I backed off and quickly hurried on, glancing back to make sure he was not following.

I had nothing to fear; his gesture was no more than the ordinary one of a person signaling to another. It was his hideous appearance that sent the cold through my body.

I felt he was evil. I've known evil since I was a child. With strange eyes I watched the death of my brother long before the dope ran rampant in his body. I see such cursed things—my eyes are stained by dreams that are real. I tell no one—I saw my mother decried into an idiot gypsy with tarot cards.

His figure haunted me. Where I went, it was; as if I followed him, but he was following ahead of me. Once in a crowded food store, I saw him throw back his head and laugh. A pyramid of metal cans hit the floor and rolled off in opposite directions. His laugh rang above the clashing metal and screaming mother of the child who caused the confusion. In that moment he was familiar—years ago someone had laughed at me like that. The laughter continued without mercy, until I

receded, trying to make the sound go away, but it still rings through my dark consciousness.

Even when I did not see him, I would imagine the sinister things he had done or could and would do. All vicious acts that occurred during that summer, I attribute to him: a baby found dead in the alley; a woman shot through the head; an old man robbed; or whatever trivia editors found appropriate to print on back pages of newspapers.

Days would go and come and I would pass him on streets or in stores and try to escape his existence—an impossibility. As the summer passed, my dread of him became numb; I learned to live with the terror of whatever would be. There was no escape. I felt his wickedness, but for once I did not know how—my mother would have known. Death was not my fear. I've often sharpened knives and traced their points along the blue veins of my wrists, never quite piercing the skin. There are worse things than death.

Reversing order, the days became short and cold—winter, a dead season for dead souls. I breathed in this cold air greedily. Any purpose there might have been for life had left me years ago, uncertain and passively continuing toward nowhere. A leaf—gold, red, brown, dead—fallen in the wind, dry and crackling underfoot or in autumn fires.

One day after working late on a pile of invoices, I stopped at the "Old Barn" to warm myself before going home. I sat alone and drank the liquor, trying to sway my thoughts from the alphabetical arrangement of overdue bills. He came in and sat across from me. Under dim lights and with a confused mind, I paused before recognizing him. Then the fear was there—all the distorted figures I was unsure of began to form.

"Let me introduce myself. We've

passed each other so often I think we should become acquainted." The voice was deep and slow, each sound carefully formed.

"I don't."

"Why not?"

"I'm leaving," I said, pushing my chair back from the table.

"Stay awhile. I already know a lot about you—name, occupation, residence, the fact you're always alone."

The voice was almost melodious—a familiar tune with slower pace than one is accustomed to. I reshuffled my chair. Damn early nights. I took the cigarette he offered me. It was already dark. He could not harm me as long as others were nearby. Lighting the cigarette, he motioned the waiter, "Two more of whatever was in that glass," and contentedly settled back in his chair.

"I'm not used to this cold. I'm from the South and like warmer things than electric blankets." He tried to laugh at his joke.

I did not reply, looking beyond him toward the cash register, trying to keep my fear subdued.

"What about you?" From the corner of my eye he cocked his head to one side with inquiry.

"The weather does not bother me."

"Then you must have spent your life here or in colder places."

"No." I shook my head, and became intent upon steadying my glass while I drank.

"Well, just where have you been?"

"Nowhere in particular."

"What about in general?" Again he tried to laugh.

Quickly I cut my eyes across to him and shrugged, "Anywhere."

My answers annoyed him. He remained silent. I was not satisfied with myself either. I never cared for human beings or liked them in general, but I always believed them to be amiable enough and reasonable. As the liquor slowed my blood and fear, I reasoned that if I could appease this person, maybe he would not harm me. But I had never tried to bootshine anyone, and I was not sure I could.

My thoughts wandered to the back pages of newspapers—a body found, a body missing. If something happened

no one would know. I have no appointments, promises, commitments, or obligations to fulfill—who would know whether I existed or not. The blind man next door would send anonymous love letters to the next occupant of my apartment. The lady downstairs would continue to cry hysterically, never knowing whom she disturbed. The computer at work would mark me sick, and after five days, a bad employment risk.

I became aware that I was gazing down at an empty glass and dirty table top to avoid seeing that which disturbed me. As a gesture, I shook the hair from my eyes and saw that he was no longer facing me, but sitting with his elbow on the table watching the clock above the counter. Instinctively I

glanced there too and watched the thin hand in its slow sweeping circle. I could hear the hum of the mechanical motor that keeps time in sequential paths.

A slight movement, a premonition—we sat facing each other in a constant stare. If one endured his ugliness long enough, one would see his face turn to hard stone. Except for the clear blue eyes that dance like pools of water in the hollow darkness. I saw my image reflected in the eyes, flowing back and forth continually with the movements of the moon.

He did not remove his gaze; I could not remove mine.

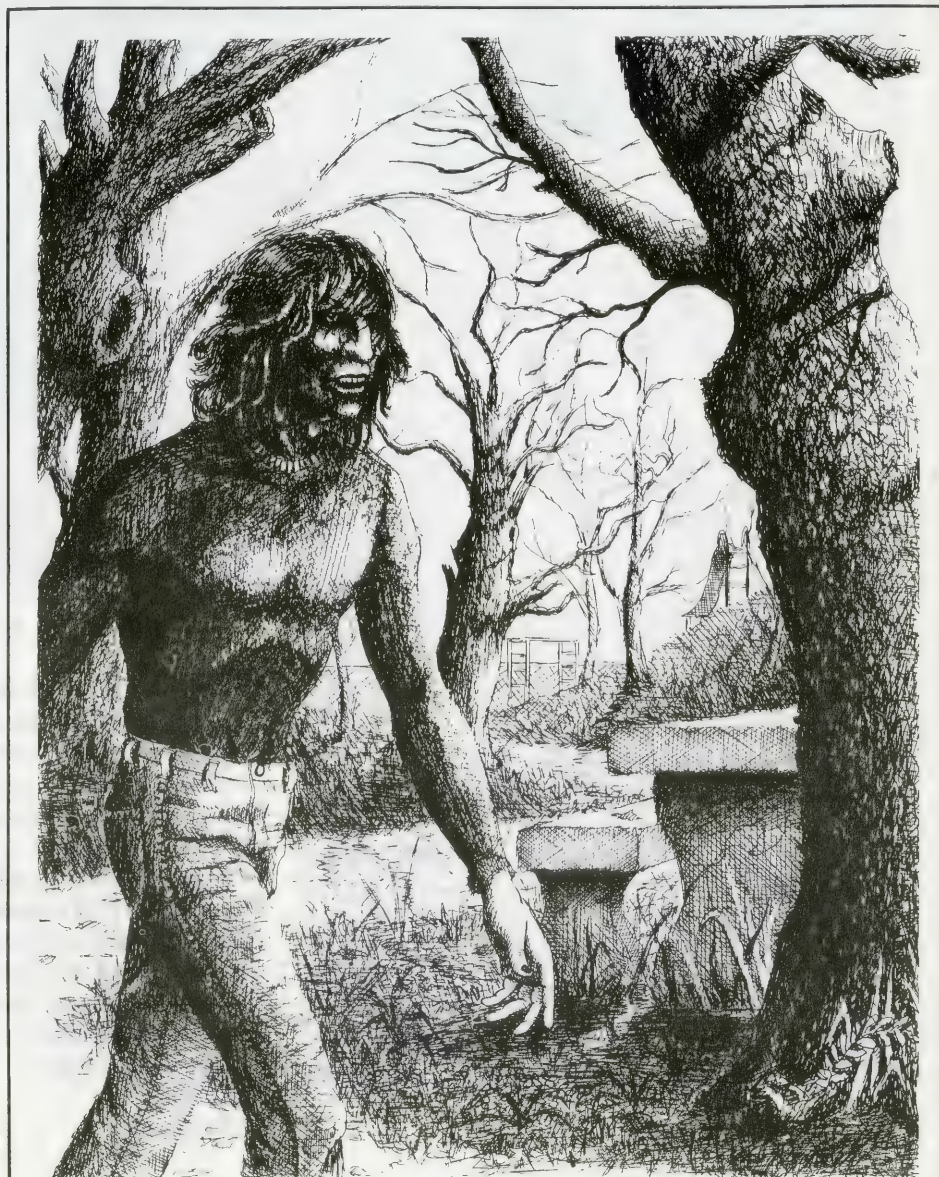


ILLUSTRATION BY TOMMY SADLER



ROLLING ALONG THE BACKROADS

Rolling along the backroads on a Greyhound bus
Through pine forests and blood-red rainwashed soil
Through fields of kudzu-covered trees
And honeysuckle and tin-topped shacks
And tattered laundry always on the line...
Here are my people
With their slicked-back hair and tight straight pants
Sunglasses and tattoos
Where a black man nods amiably and waves a greeting
And the white man in his Puritanism never touches life...
Yet each is secure in his own existence
Never realizing that in the humid summer heat
All things change
Gradually
In the South

—Christy Hudgins



PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTY H'UDGINS



25¢ to anywhere and back :

A LOOK at the

BY JIMMY WELDON

On Avenue A in Opelika, between Vinson's Bakery and the basement entrance to Hagedorn's Department Store, there was a tunnel. It was nothing extraordinary, really; just a concrete catacomb, painted a gaudy shade of red. It was where the colored people went into the picture show. As a small child I always wondered what it was like to go through that dark and mysterious passage to the colored balcony of the local movie theater. A few tentative steps into the labyrinth were as far as my feet would take me. Then caution would overcome my curiosity as I remembered the potential danger that lay ahead. It was a very real possibility, in my young mind, that

"the nigras might grab me." That prospect of unknown danger never failed to give me a thrill.

The main entrance to the theater, where the white people paid their admission, was on Eighth Street, around the corner from the foreboding tunnel. The building itself was torn down several years ago. The long foyer is now a "mall," which is just as good a term, I suppose, as any for describing a space between two buildings. Formerly occupying that "space" was the Martin Theater. Certainly there was nothing terribly romantic about the name itself. It did not have the ring of other more celebrated movie houses such as the Bijou, or the Fox, or the Alabama. There were no lush red carpets lining the lobby or tall, lean ushers milling about in their ornately

buttoned uniforms. But it was the only show in town; and to a kid growing up in a small town, it was a round trip ticket to anywhere Hollywood chose to take him. Any thirteen-year-old could slip his bike into the iron rack on the curb, hand his quarter to the girl in the booth, and half-run, half-walk down that long corridor to the double doors where the ticket-taker waited. One had only to trip the electric eye (what a marvelous bit of magic that was), wait for the heavy wooden doors to snap open, and begin a journey to Bali, Iwo Jima, Gotham, or even Transylvania. Today, that same path will lead you to a vast expanse of asphalt.

* * *

My generation, that age group whose adolescence spanned the Fifties

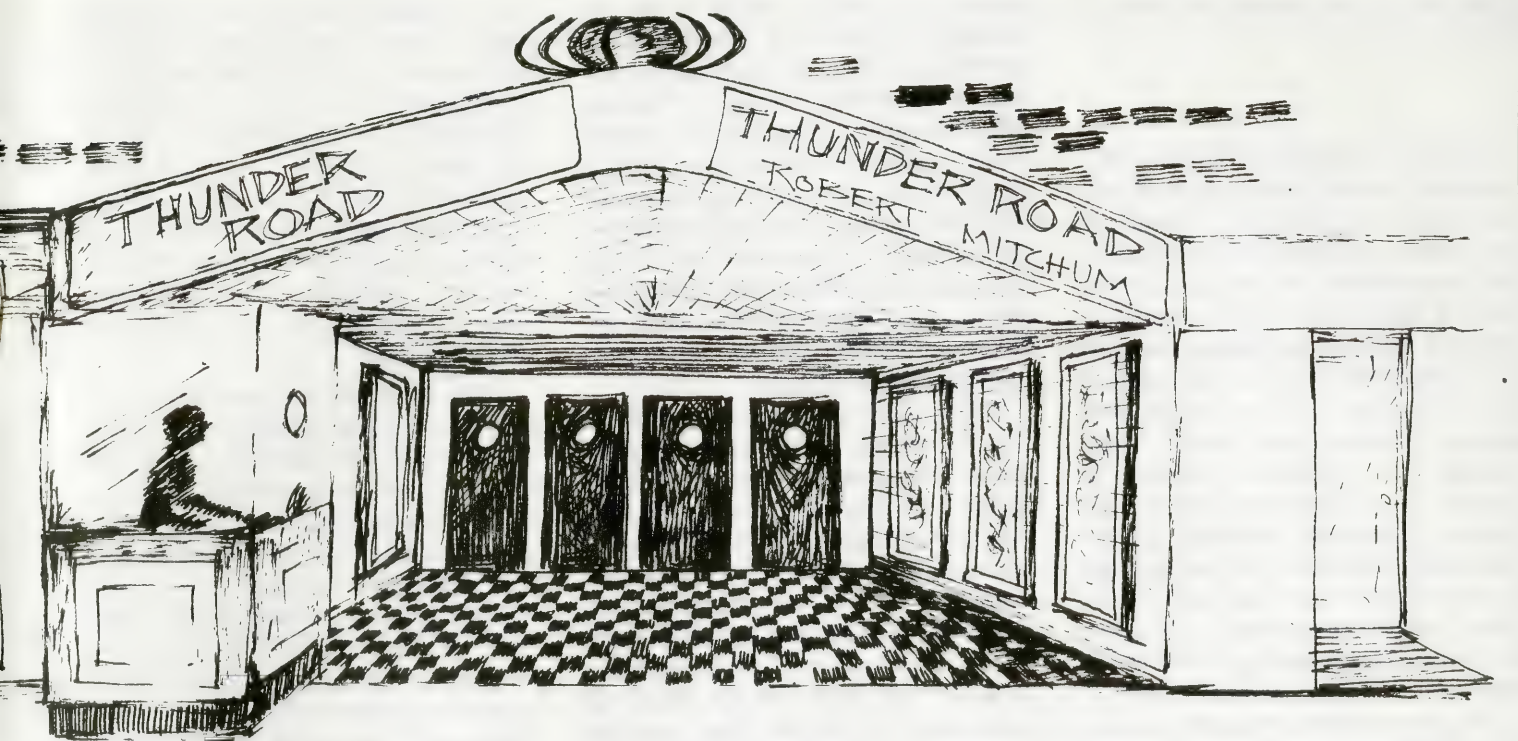


ILLUSTRATION BY NANCY PLAYLE

LOST PICTURE SHOW

and Sixties, is popularly regarded as the first television generation. This is readily discernible, for we, and to a greater degree succeeding generations, display the obvious benefits of that revolutionary post-war medium. We are essentially illiterate. But I leave that hot potato to be passed back and forth between the sociologists and educators. I will not deny that we children of the Sixties cut our teeth on the Mickey Mouse Club and Howdy Doody. But of greater importance is the fact that we were the last movie generation. Of course children still go to the picture show. Yet no one can deny that going to the movies is no longer a rite of childhood. The Saturday morning matinee has been replaced by badly animated network cartoons. Tom and Jerry have

been anthropomorphized. Mickey Mouse has been supplanted by Johnny Quest. Foghorn Leghorn taught simple virtues; "Shazam" gives us action. And we are all poorer.

Even the types of movies that are now being produced are the result of our society's increased sophistication. Films today are created for, and cater to, specific segments of the movie-going public. Movies made in previous decades, in spite of their more obvious shortcomings, had a universal quality. A third-grader could go see "The Ten Commandments" with his grandmother and the next week watch "The Thin Red Line" with his high school brother. The movie house itself was no less a touchstone of shared experience. The inexpensive nature of the medium afforded ready accessibility to every

social stratum. Children, the life-blood of the business, were granted special financial considerations. Six RC Cola bottle caps or five Golden Flake Potato Chip labels were often the only price of admission on a Saturday morning. A safety patrol badge (circa Sixth Grade) was a pass for any regular feature. Through the growing years, we saw the 25¢ admission go the way of the newsreel. A thirty-five cent, fifty cent, even an alarming seventy-five cent ticket did not slow attendance. During the "50¢ period," a faintly disturbing development took place. The girl in the booth stopped tearing tickets off the roll and began feeding them out through stainless steel slots. In my tender years I could not appreciate the implications of such a seemingly insignificant change.

However, it was indeed the shape of things to come.

* * *

Standing in front of the City Sundries and looking across Main Street, one saw an interesting triad of storefronts. Immediately adjacent to the theater stood the Arcade Coffee Shop, a diner owned by the same man who ran the local ambulance service. The ambulance itself, usually parked directly in front of the Arcade, was always immaculate. Small boys, waiting for someone's mother to retrieve them from the nine o'clock feature, constantly marveled at the glistening chromed hardware precisely positioned around the walls of the cabin. With the amber and white lights of the marquee dancing off the finish, that vehicle literally radiated color.

One door down from the Arcade was the Recreation Center. Having been told that only grownups were supposed to go into the diner, I was similarly admonished that only "hoods" frequented the establishment next door. The Recreation Center, you see, was a pool room. However, I could peek through the venetian blinds and see some of the hoods engaged in deadly serious combat over the ponderous slate tables.

Anticipation. Grade school youngsters thrived on it. Thoughts of recess, lunchtime, and Friday afternoon stimulated Pavlovian-like responses. The prospect of seeing "Thunder Road" was tantamount to redemption. Even the Martin Theater's foyer whetted the young ticketholder's appetite. An inordinate number of ad windows adorned the walkway. Pondering "upcoming attractions," children stood before those windows transfixed. "Come on, we'll miss the previews" was an incantation strong enough to break the spell.

At the end of the hall, beyond the electric eye, behind the darkly-stained doors, the usher waited. Only, nobody ever called him an usher; he was just a ticket-taker. He was always older, one of those high school boys whose name we never knew. He was thoroughly nondescript save one thing—he always wore his socks (white in those days)

around his ankles. Once, I got up enough courage to ask him why, after tearing my ticket, he insisted on handing the stub back to me. He explained, with eminent logic, that if I needed to go outside, I could come back in again. That was when I was ten years old. Why are they still handing me the ticket stub? (Author's note: Only recently have I, Mitty-like, conquered this ancient indignity. The method? Hand the usher your ticket and keep walking. But I digress.)

Once inside the lobby, the first act was to queue up at the concession stand. I suppose we all remember the stacks of Goobers, Reese's cups, Raisinettes, and the myriad other confections that make up a diabetic's nightmare. But I best remember the black hands. This was not an obscure type of candy; these black hands were attached to black people. Only we never saw the people. They were on the other side of the wall which stood directly behind the man at the counter. The side that led to the colored balcony. We could see their hands when they passed their money through the low window and received, in return, the luxury foods of an affluent society.

Directly opposite the popcorn stand were two portals. On the other side of those portals it was very dark. The one time I saw the inside of the theater when the house lights were at their maximum, I was terribly disappointed. The carpet, deep crimson in the dark, was actually a corroded, vile rust colored rug. The drapes on the walls (I still haven't figured out why they did that) were the same dust-laden grey as the ones hanging by the lobby exits. And the place got so much smaller when they turned on the lights. But in the dark, that theater was an opera house. Enveloped in pitch black darkness, small boys grouped in pockets to savor a special triple horror feature. How could one forget "The Blob" (starring a very young Steve McQueen), "The Fly" (featuring a middle-aged Ray Milan), and "The Day of the Triffids" (starring a large array of triffids), all in one afternoon? I remember particularly well one double-feature that combined both "culture" and horror. Vincent Price,

that venerable high priest of Gothic horror, introduced me to Nathaniel Hawthorne in a low budget rendition of "Rappachini's Daughter"; the other half of the twin bill was Poe's "Fall of the House of Usher." Films such as these drew the highest praise of the adolescent critic. "Boy, that was a good one" was the ultimate review. We may not have been artistically critical at that age, but we could agree on such things.

What we could not view (or would not) was of great significance in the halcyon days. Sex and dirty words, we knew, would come our way in time. Just to conjecture about what really happened in "From Here to Eternity" was satisfaction enough. We suffered no frustration at missing "God's Little Acre" or "Splendor in the Grass," even though our smug, sophisticated older brothers wouldn't relate the events of the movie ("we wouldn't understand," they would say, correctly). Kirk Douglas was far more significant than Carole Baker. Even then we knew the importance of priorities.

Our dreams were housed in that theater building. As we grew older, and our dreams became more "realistic," the vessel of those movie-land fantasies deteriorated. It was fitting. We started making jokes about the gummy floors under the seats (over the years the concrete surface had accumulated a resin-like coat composed of spillage from every soft drink and candy imaginable). I never really saw what it looked like. Like everyone else, I only felt its tug as it adhered to the soles of my shoes. It was nasty and, I'm quite sure, protein rich.

They finally stopped using the theater for public performances while I was still in grade school. I suppose it had been the closest thing the town had to a public hall. Gene Krupa once performed on the stage that annually was the setting for the parade of town lovelies—the Maid of Cotton contest. It was also the scene of little hooper's strutting their stuff in the yearly dance recitals. That was before they decided to move that sort of thing over to Northside Elementary School. Somehow, the civic productions thereafter were not quite as "big time."

The decay accelerated. Acting on reports that roaches had been sighted scuttling back and forth between the aisles, we dubbed the establishment the "Martin Roach Pit." At that stage of growing up, sarcasm was highly prized.

In the waning days of the Martin, black people finally got their chance to walk through the electric beam. The mechanical doors, knowing no better, jerked open. The Management sealed the colored balcony, at least for a while. The last movie I remember watching at the Martin was "The Sand

Pebbles." The film itself was nothing out of the ordinary, but my vantage point was. Part of an overflow crowd was seated in the balcony. Once seated, I realized what a poor view of the screen the colored folks had enjoyed. Extended high over the audience below, I experienced a vague discomfort. As the balcony filled to capacity and the screen lit up, an ominous crack, like the discharge of a small caliber rifle, cut the air. The whole balcony groaned and then sagged, ever so slightly. When the movie was over, I made for solid ground.

Not long after that, they closed the place and built a new one out at the shopping center. That was about the same time the business district started drying up. When they finally padlocked the doors of the Martin Theater, I really didn't pay much attention. When the Urban Renewal people brought in the wrecking cranes and knocked it down, I felt a little empty but didn't quite know why.



MOUNTAINS

Mountains
encircling me
like prehistoric monsters—
head to tail—undulating dorsa
bare and dry ancient sentinels beneath the sky.

Rocks
where even the hardy furze withers
lizard hides buffeted by ice, and wind, and sand.
trembling with the world's first quickening
burning, and freezing, melting, and rebuilding.

Whole empires have trod your barren dust
their glory flickered feebly
and died again—*ignis-fatuus* in the marsh
of human splendor.

Awesome hills!
I stare and tremble
my mind paralyzed by unknown fear.
I want to reach to you my eager hands
To touch your coldest stones and understand
the enigma you hold in ageless memory so dear.

Murderous sphynx
You stretch your death-cold shadows
claws dipped in blood, gaping darkness
of towering precipices—you curse my arrogance.

But when the moon is out
smoothing cliffs and crevices
in silver light
I'll climb your furthest height.

—Heleni Pedersoli

A CRY FROM THE SHORE

I am old, burnt-out, and lean,
The hollow, weathered shell
Of a promise unfulfilled,
But life is force
And a reckless, youthful tide
That must discard
The remnants of the past.

So now I lie upon the shore.

There are many here,
Lost from light and burdened with age,
A fellowship of despair.
Through the darkness we send and hear
Our voices, murmuring of life
Like men on the desert crying for water.
We talk and nod in understanding
Yet all we share are our loneliness,
Our loss, and our memories.
In vain we try to feel
What we once felt,
To see what we once saw
Beyond the mist on the horizon.

But I am lost.
I can do no more than think and dream,
And in dreamy remembrance how I long
To return, to feel the surge and pulse
Of the passing throng, flowing with a strong
And steady movement to the sea
So far away
So very far away...
Far beyond this shore;
Beyond the vision
That with age contracts,
And loses the future
To focus on the past.

—H. Patrick White

FOG

FICTION BY PHIL BAILEY

The road in front of me is foggy, dim with that special type of fog that occurs only in the mountains of northern Alabama in the fall of the year. Ghostly outlines appear and disappear on either side of the road, some familiar, some not. But the road itself is the same as it was years ago when I traveled it so much. So many nights I traveled this road to and away from her, that it is permanently etched in my memory. Driving it now, it is so familiar that my mind has no trouble carrying me back to a similar foggy night.

That night, I pulled up the short gravel driveway, past the Sears chain-link fence in front of the small bricked house. The house itself blocked my view of the rotting barn, giving the place a very isolated and lonely appearance. The fog had effectively sealed the area, hiding completely the few neighboring houses. I parked my Sprite between the ancient Ford truck and the slightly newer Plymouth which commanded the carport. I reflected sadly on the Plymouth, wondering how Linda could drive it, since it had no power steering or power brakes. The car was very hard to handle, and Linda seemed so frail at times.

Because of the fog my arrival had gone unnoticed, so I walked up on the small cement porch and knocked on the door. Linda swung the door open, exclaimed "Hello," and kissed me all in one smooth motion. I noticed that Billie, Linda's three-year-old sister, was hanging around Linda's knees. I had the feeling that I was experiencing the mixture of love, pride, and responsibility that fills a man who has worked hard all day as he returns to his own little family at night. The thought was too confusing to put into words, but I knew that Linda knew the feeling, and our love grew in that moment.

Just then Linda's mother, alerted by the activity, came into the room, her voice high and anxious, "Stan? Is that

you, Stan?" She was visibly disappointed when she saw it was me, and her eyes showed a fierce yet despairing ache. I knew she had been angry with Linda when she threw over her old boyfriend, an all-county football player, for me, but this look seemed to run deeper than that. She said, "How are you?" rather curtly, and turned away down the short hallway toward the kitchen before I could answer.

Linda turned just in time to stare at empty space. Her mother had retreated to the heart of her domain, the long room composed of the den-dining-kitchen area, along with utility

room. She temporarily loosened her control over the tiny living room while Linda and I were there, but her presence was felt there as it was throughout the rest of the house. The den-dining-kitchen area was the center of her world. Here was the equipment necessary to cook, sew, wash, and relax with her family. Mr. Owens had his place there: his throne-like recliner occupied a prime spot in front of the TV. But it was her world. Mrs. Owens could usually be found here, busy with something in a determined but not very effective manner; it gave her a vantage point from which she could

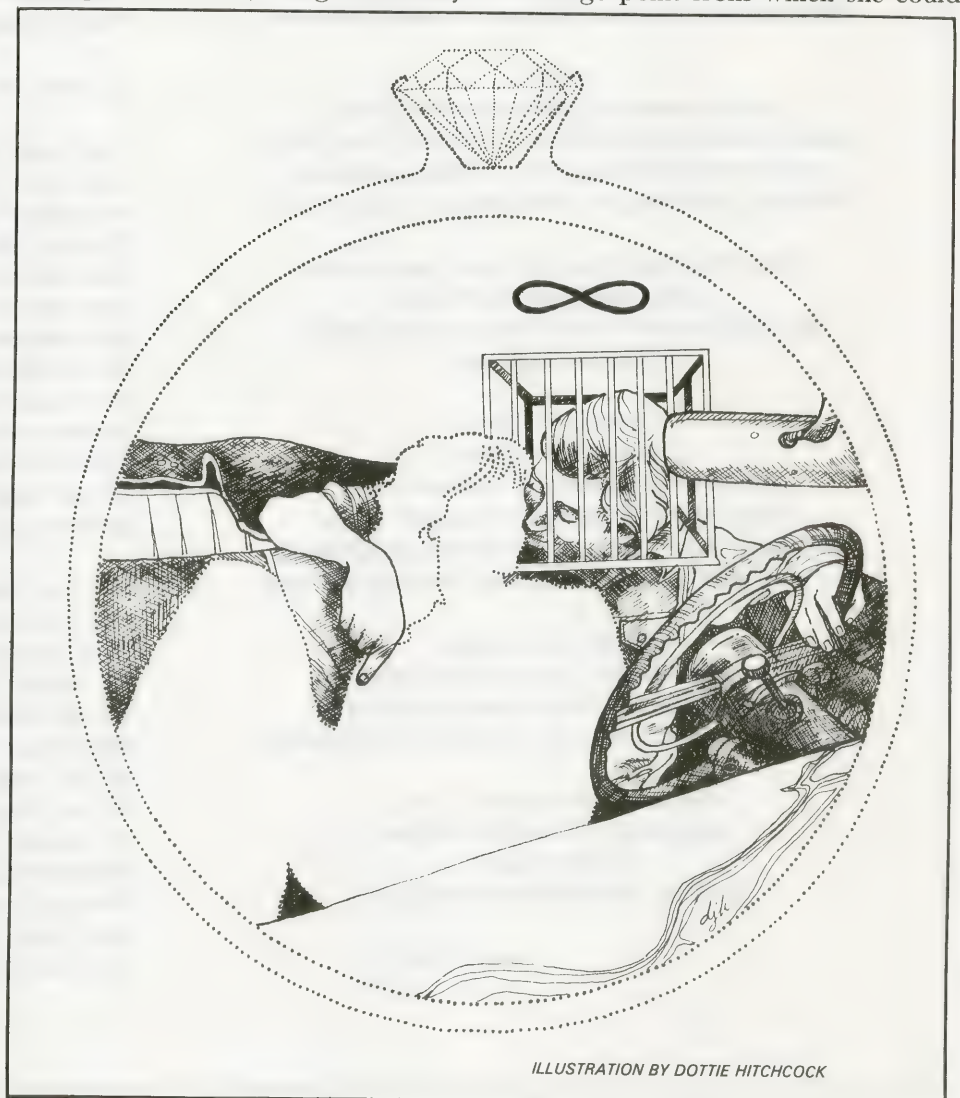


ILLUSTRATION BY DOTTIE HITCHCOCK

discern most of what was passing in her realm. Even with Mrs. Owens at work in the kitchen, the house was noticeably empty and quiet. Stan, Linda's twenty-year-old brother, and Debbie, his fiancée, were usually there on weekend evenings, as well as Sharon, Linda's thirteen-year-old sister. I looked at Linda and said, "What's going on?"

"Well, Stan is somewhere between here and Georgia, Sharon's back in our room, and Daddy's on the late shift down at the dam. Debbie called and said she was coming over, but she hasn't gotten here yet. And Billie and I are right here." She smiled brilliantly, looking at me through her deep blue eyes set off by her golden brown hair. Then she looked concerned and said, "Don't mind Mother. She's just worried about Stan. You can't expect her to be all smiles with her precious Stan gone five days a week."

"I just wish she liked me better, that's all."

"I've told you before, she likes you fine, it's just that she doesn't believe you love me—she thinks I'm wasting my time with you."

"But I do love you."

"I know, and I love you, too."

* * *

The next Saturday was unseasonably warm for that time of year, and I thought a ride in the Sprite with the top down would be nice. However, when I called Linda, she was already gone "somewhere with Debbie." It suddenly occurred to me for the first time that for the last couple of months whenever Linda was not with me she seemed to be with Debbie. Of course, Debbie was Stan's fiancée, and she had been a cheerleader for three years and still came to practice every once in a while just to give pointers and advice. I knew that lots of times Debbie took Linda home from those practices, and that they talked a lot. I also knew that Debbie was one of the few people who knew Linda and I were going to get married. Linda had insisted on telling her. I dismissed it all as "girl talk" until this particular Saturday. Linda finally got home and called me to come on up.

When I drove into the yard Linda and Debbie were sitting on the porch swinging their legs. They were both grinning about something, and Linda told me that Stan and Debbie were going to buy a car and a trailer pretty soon. Debbie added that they might go to look next weekend when Stan got home.

"Where are you going to put the trailer?" I wanted to know.

"I guess we'll put it out here in the pasture or down at Daddy's," Debbie said, "we really haven't thought about where to put it."

I was thirsty, so I went into the kitchen to get a glass of water. As I came back out the door I caught part of what seemed to be the continuation of an earlier conversation.

"Did he say anything about a ring yet?" Debbie was asking Linda.

"No," Linda replied, "I dropped him a hint the other day, but he didn't seem to catch it."

"Well, has he said anything else about when, like maybe when ya'll graduate next year?"

"No, I haven't tried to get him to say anything about that yet."

At this point I cleared my throat, opened the door, and stepped out into the bright afternoon sunlight. The conversation dried up after that, and it wasn't long before Debbie dismissed herself with, "Well, I'll leave you two alone now," and a knowing wink.

"Where in the world did you go this morning?" I asked as soon as Debbie was gone.

"Oh, we spent all morning at the boat docks getting a tan and talking. What did you do yesterday?"

"Oh, just went to band practice, why?"

"Why did you carry Cristy with you?" Linda asked in an injured tone.

"She called me and asked me if I would take her. We are neighbors, you know. She said her mother had to work late," I said defensively.

"I wonder why she called you? I don't suppose she could get anybody else to take her. And you went right along, ran right over and got her."

"Yes, what did you expect me to say? 'No, you can't ride with me, Linda might get mad?'"

"She's watching out for her own in-

terests. She could have gotten lots of rides without calling you."

"Well, she called me and I took her, what of it? It's not like we slipped off for the weekend. I took her to band practice and took her home. Why fight about it?" I was really getting heated by this time.

"Don't be mad at me, baby," she cooed. "I just love you and want to keep you all mine." With that she sighed deeply and curled up against me. Besides that I don't know what happened, but Cristy never called to ask me to carry her to band practice again.

* * *

The next week the band did not practice, so Wednesday I carried Linda home from cheerleader practice. It was a beautiful day, and I suggested, "Let's take the top down and drive down to the dam." Linda thought this was a great idea, so we stopped at a small store, took the top down, and turned down the narrow, winding road to the dam. With the wind rushing around our ears the only conversation was by shouting, so Linda sat in the shotgun seat, smiling contentedly and soaking up the sun. The fall weather had begun to turn the leaves, and the gold, brown, and red hues that filled the woods were spectacular. But even the golden leaves of fall were no match for sunlight on her hair, and for me the blue of her eyes as she whispered "I love you" far surpassed any blue that the sky had ever produced. We arrived at the dam just before sundown, the most beautiful time of all. The dying sun on the water and the leaves gave them a special color seen at no other time of day. Linda and I walked with our arms around each other out onto the top of the dam. We stopped, and she turned to look at me. As I took her into my arms the sensations that passed from her warm shoulders into my hands were so good, so alive, so right, that I knew that this was the only girl I could ever fall in love with, and the only girl I could ever marry. My blood ran hot, for Linda was a desirable girl, but running deeper, much deeper, was a love that I knew would never burn out, and never die. We kissed, and then

as I held her tightly with her head next to mine I said, "I'm so glad we're going to be married, I don't think I can live without you."

"I know I can't live without you," she said, "I've already tried." We stood there on the dam watching the river go by and the sun disappear. When we got back to the car I kissed her again and in that moment there were only two people in the world. We didn't talk any more that evening. We got into the car and roared up the narrow, winding road.

The next day I waited for Linda after cheerleader practice, but we did not go to the dam. The weather had taken a nasty turn, it was getting quite cold, and it looked like rain. Linda ran out, got into the car, and we took off. We hadn't gone very far before she said, "I've decided to open an account at the bank and put a little in each week, so we'll have some money when we get married."

"Ummm," I said. I was wondering what that funny sound in the engine was and if I'd have to pull the whole thing to fix it.

Linda went on, "Debbie and Stan went Saturday and looked at a car. Debbie said she was going to put her foot down and make Stan set a date. I think they went to look at a trailer, too."

"Where are they going to put it?" I asked, deciding maybe the knock was just something I left loose on the carburetor last night when I was tinkering with it.

"She didn't say; I guess they'll put it in the pasture, or somewhere down on Debbie's daddy's place." When this drew no response from me she said, "Just think how nice it would be to have a place of your own." By that time we were at Linda's house. I kissed her bye and drove home thoughtfully, even though the knock had stopped and the engine purred along happily.

* * *

By the next Saturday Stan and Debbie had bought a car. As I pulled up the driveway it caught my attention, a nondescript white-on-blue Mercury about four years old. Well, I thought, maybe it's OK. Some Mercuries seem

to run practically forever. But I was kidding myself and I knew it; I had been around cars too long. Linda and Debbie came out to greet me.

"Hi!" Linda said with a hug.

"Hey, come look at our car." Debbie began to steer me toward it. "It's real nice," she asserted, "got power steering, power brakes, automatic transmission, all the things you really need."

She didn't convince me though, and Linda and I went into the house. When we were alone Linda said, "Stan's really giving Debbie a hard time. He won't say anything about setting a date or anything. It's got Debbie pretty upset." Something about the way Linda looked at me made me shiver all over. "Are you all right?" she asked immediately.

"I'm OK," I assured her, "I guess I just haven't warmed up yet."

* * *

The next Friday I was again at the Owens'. Both Mrs. Owens and Debbie were anxiously awaiting Stan's arrival. I wondered why he had taken a job so far away from home. It seemed to me that he would want to be close to his fiancée. Debbie and Mrs. Owens were generally on excellent terms, but today it seemed that they could not bear to be in the same room. After a while, Debbie came into the living room with Linda and me, partly so she could watch the road, since Mrs. Owens controlled the kitchen windows, and partly to talk to us.

"How are ya'll?" she asked as she sat down.

"OK, I guess," I said.

"Have ya'll decided when to tell them yet?" Debbie wanted to know. We all knew *them* meant Linda's father and mother, who didn't want us to see each other in the first place. It had taken Linda two months to persuade them to let us go steady, and Debbie seemed to know all about this.

"No, we haven't thought too much about it," I said.

"I wish Stan would get here," Debbie sighed. "I worry about that boy; I don't see why he wants to work so far away from home that he has to stay weeknights." I thought Mrs. Owens,

who was pretending to fold clothes in the kitchen but was really watching the road, might be wondering the same thing. It was only a short time later when Stan arrived. From where I sat in the living room I could see Mrs. Owens standing in the kitchen door, while Debbie stood in the front door. Stan got out of the car, thanked the driver, opened the gate, and walked up the driveway, carrying a big bundle which I knew must be a week's worth of dirty clothes. He walked slowly and deliberately up the driveway, right past the front steps, and into his mother's waiting arms. Debbie immediately burst into tears, cursing. "I said I wouldn't cry the next time something like this happened," she said. "I just hate her!" Linda and I walked into the kitchen, and Mrs. Owens' face showed that for her this moment was perfect. By that time, Stan had deposited his clothes-bundle with his mother, and Debbie had regained her composure. Debbie walked in and Stan came to give her a hug and kiss. Rather than watch, Mrs. Owens turned to adjust something on the stove, her face noticeably less ecstatic. Stan and Debbie went down the hall, probably to put up clothes and to plan for that night. Linda and I went back to the living room, with Linda muttering something about how mean her mother was, and suddenly, I understood.

"Look, Linda, I've got to go." I tried to hide the urgency that I felt.

"What's the big rush?" she asked. "You just got here about an hour ago."

"Well, you know, all the confusion of Stan getting here and everything; I just think I better go."

"What in the world is wrong with you? You look like you've seen a ghost."

"Well, I feel like I ought to go home, that's all." I had been maneuvering her closer and closer to the door, and now I was almost there, but she grabbed me and stopped me short.

"What's wrong, baby?" she asked with concern in her voice. "Is there something you haven't told me?"

"No, there's nothing I haven't told you...I mean, you know everything...aw, you know what I mean." I was getting desperate.

"What is wrong?" Her voice was trembling, and I could see her eyes filling with tears.

"Nothing, really." I kissed her as quickly as I could, gently removing her arms from my neck. I could feel her warm tears on my face, and my heart, which had already sunk to a new low, quietly shattered within me. I opened

the door and went out into the night. The Sprite cranked on the first try, and I backed out the driveway.

* * *

My mind jars, and I can see the last curve is ahead. It straightens, and through the fog I can see that two trailers now stand in the pasture beside

the small bricked house. The driveway, my last familiar landmark, flashes past. I sigh. My car speeds on down the twisting road, going nowhere in particular, and the fog closes behind me.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY MALCOLM A. TODD, JR.

A BETTER WAY

The Toomer's

Corner

point:

BY RENA MOUNT

When you scrutinize Auburn society, from my point of view at least, you might conclude with me that it is properly institutionalized in one grand symbol: the flung roll.

After all, what could I say in my Christmas letters this year? That I met a good friend for supper one night who earns his living with a traveling snake show, and that he brought along an elementary school principal from Gordo, Alabama, named Donald Duck?

That our dog got a personally addressed letter from the veterinarian saying, "Dear Bowzer. It is once again time for your rabies shot"?

That we listened for an hour and a half while a distinguished English professor hailed in the New Year with a tirade against possums? "Really," I said, "you get too worked up over possums. Why, they are the most adaptable creatures known, and this has enabled them to survive for millions of years." "Yes," he growled, "and that's what's wrong with America today. My God, the only aboreal creature on earth who falls out of trees. I tell you, Pessimism is nothing compared to the dangers of Possimism."

That once again I rejoiced politely in the annual Wildlife Unit supper, heaping my plate with fragrant baked armadillo, beaver casserole, fried rattlesnake, and muskrat stew; and less than a week later turned down flat an invitation to come enjoy an intact goat, which a friend had barbecued all weekend on an old bedspring in her back yard?

That I came upon an acquaintance at the Mall merrily flipping through Villagers three sizes too small for her, whose hair was ironed flat on top and frizzed out two feet past each ear, who said, "Oh hello...I have become a Botticelli princess"?

That at my doctor's insistence I took a flu shot, lay awake five nights freezing and sweating, finally dragged myself to the phone and was connected to his secretary who trilled through Muzak, "Oh yes, you see, we inoculate you with a little bitsy flu, and your body gets busy as a bee and makes your very own army of antibodies"?

All this and boola-boola too.

I refuse to get defensive, for these roots go back as far as the second century, when Tertullian asserted that there is only one basis for believing in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and that is, "Because it is absurd." This hap-

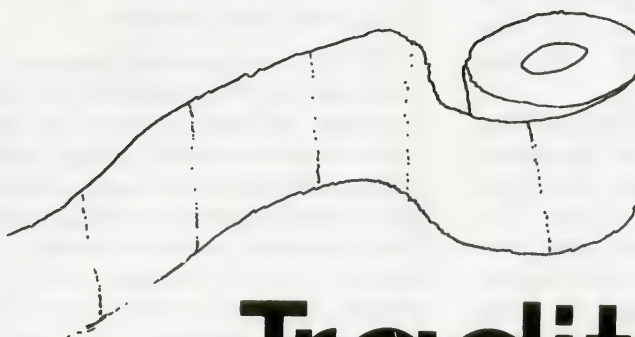
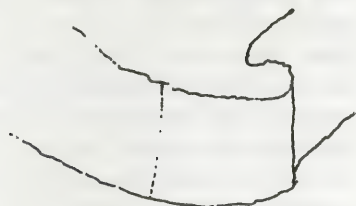
py strain echoes down the ages, unsullied by attempts of modern philosophers to pull a long face over it—a rather shaky basis for faith, but endlessly applicable and deeply ingrained in the mentality of every freshman who has tried for days to call the library, discovering at last from a Department of Laboratory Experiences operator that what he really wants is The Learning Resources Center. Dim philistines may curl into furry balls with their *Time* magazines when a major contender for the office of President of the United States avows that he never misses "The Waltons" and calls his wife "Mom-mie"; but the student, having just penned the final plagiarized flourish on his term paper, "Time, Death, and the Gothic Cathedral as Related to Sexual Imagery in the Recently Discovered Early Short Stories of Lydia B. Pinkham," prefers a whiff of fresh air. And together with his Squeeze and his Roll, he steps down to Toomer's Corner to make his simple, affirmative statement.

And where else, these dreary days, could he see deans leaping up and down on top of stalled Chevrolets with Ohio license tags, wild-eyed tourists

(Continued on Pg. 40)

TO SAY HURRAY?

Tissue



Tradition

Counterpoint:

BY CHARLOTTE WARD

In this Bicentennial year the ladies of Auburn, young and old (and middle-aged, like me) are doing their creative utmost to capture the essence of the loveliest village in embroidery and applique of nine-by-nine percale, ultimately to be stitched together in a quilt. I trust Mrs. Mount has done a slightly padded hollow cylinder picked out in orange and blue briar stitch to set off the white on white, since I must agree that such an emblem would indeed capture a certain "essence."

Only recently at the University Senate I listened to our well-known Chevrolet-leaping dean defend the maturity and judgment of the TAS* and point out our obligation as faculty to help him/her develop even further that profound sense of dedication to scholarship and community responsibility each one of them brings to campus as freshmen, along with their brand new pre-washed jeans when

**Typical Auburn Student. The Ward children, as they grew up, were reprimanded for their lack of scholastic diligence with the phrase, "Don't be a TAS!" Of course that was years ago.*

they arrive in their shiny new cars in the fall, ready for rush and football and whatever other values** the University may offer. So surely it is the duty of the University community to support those serious, mature students in the disdain they must feel—yea, even the embarrassment—at the juvenile and undignified practice of festooning wires, street lamps, and live oak trees of the intersection of our city's two principal thoroughfares with toilet paper.***

But there are other cogent arguments for the cessation of this outmoded custom, however much the alumni protest.****

1. It is a frightful waste of paper. Think before you throw that roll that you could, by refraining, save a tree.

2. Others are in dire need of the very product you are spending so casually.

***Surely there are some!*

****Mrs. Mount delicately refers to "rolls." Let us call a spade a spade.*

*****Everyone knows it is alumni trying to cling to or recapture their lost youth who foster these things, not serious, mature undergraduates.*

No one who has traveled in Europe could ever again fail to cherish the soft, squeezable product of American know-how. (I once overheard two very sedate grey-haired American ladies seated on the sunny deck of a Rhine river steamer discussing not the romantic castles on the bank but the relative harshness of the German, French, and British products. I hate to think what they'd say if they chanced to pass through Auburn on Sunday morning after a football victory!)

3. There is a climate-environmental factor to be considered. As you may have noticed, rain is not uncommon in Auburn at many seasons of the year. Wet toilet paper, dripping from trees to ground, presents a removal problem, and research done some years ago by the author under auspices of the League of Women Voters (who are concerned with Environmental Quality) showed that, biodegradability-wise, if you write your initials on a piece of that paper before you toss it, your son may come along in his college generation, bend down and retrieve a fragment from a flower bed across from J & M, and say to his date, "Dear old Dad was here, 'way back in '76."

(Continued from Pg. 38)

huddling inside with protective arms thrown around their poodles? Where else take a strategic leghold atop the staid marble bank and pelt bony professors on the head with rolls of the old standby?

I interviewed several aging Auburnites on this matter. One prominent matron, recently elected the Green Gardeners Club Autumnal Unwrapper of the Downtown Rose Bushes, commented, "Our secretary is currently corresponding with Union Camp Paper Company officials, who assure us that their scientists are working day and night to produce before next fall a heavily perforated product which, if tossed, will fall apart in neat squares. The D.A.R. has joined us in sponsoring this Bicentennial project."

A graying moneylender said, "You wouldn't remember the time Shug beat Florida for the first time. As the Florida cars came through the in-

tersection, right here in front of my store, the students poured over them like slow molasses and simply picked them up and turned them around, back toward the stadium." His eyes misted over with gratitude.

"My son," said a retired professor of Horticulture, "was following in my footsteps, having worked for two years on his dissertation, a study of the strange indigenous lichens encrusting the magnolias in front of Biggin Hall. You can imagine how he felt when, one morning as he reached over his microscope to stroke them, he felt a hand on his shoulder. He turned around to face Dr. Philpott, who whispered, 'Please, don't squeeze the Charmin.' Fortunately, the poor boy was accepted into the Zoology Department and is now chairing their federally funded research project, 'The Natural History of The Casino Cockroach Population.'"

But in a well-loved bookstore I received the reply which, after I finish

my night course in Assertiveness for Women, I shall repeat at cocktail parties to anyone who launches into his geneology. "Good morning, sir," I said, "I am doing an article on throwing toilet paper at Toomer's Corner. There is widespread opposition mounting." He looked up from his cash register, pushed back his horned rims, and said, "What else do you know that I don't give a damn about?"

And I tell you, Dr. Ward, we will not be pushed too far. I, whose very existence depended on that night in Felton Little Park when my father pulled off the coup of the season, by tying the ropes of the Barnum and Bailey circus tent to a freight train and watching the first glints of true love steal into my mother's eyes as the canvas heaved and blew away for Birmingham, leaving startled elephants and trapeze girls to fend for themselves among the shouts and cheers, tell you: Dr. Ward, we will not.



Charlotte Ward



Rena Mount

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID CUMMINGS



ILLUSTRATION BY BRUCE PLAYLE

THE MAP

FICTION BY B. D. COLE

Bork's lungs hurt—he would have fallen had he not been running for his life. The nearest friendly troops were only 300 meters ahead. Soon he collapsed into controlled if not friendly sand.

"Better see the XO." Tom Norman, the second lieutenant in charge of the reconnaissance platoon, stood over Bork. He pulled himself up reluctantly. They walked to where the battalion executive officer sat. The XO was a major—bald, short, and once-passed over for lieutenant-colonel. He was a "typical" marine in the worst sense of the word. Jeremiah P. Shellenbach substituted hooch burning for a shortage of silver oak leaves. He attempted to compensate for a notably average intelligence by considering himself the

past or present, or perhaps the future, John Wayne. It was hard to tell which, since the major's personality was marked by a lack of timeliness and sensitivity matched by the stunted palm he leaned against.

"Well, did he find it?" This was directed at Norman, although Bork stood next to him.

"No sir."

"Better fucking well hope the gooks don't have that map, Bork."

"I'm sure they don't, Major."

"Better fucking well hope they don't. We'll see the Colonel at the new LZ."

"Yes sir."

Later riding a helo to the new LZ, Bork considered the battalion commander's likely reaction to the lost

map. Not good. But not as medieval as the executive officer's. Hell, the gooks—in this case the local Viet Cong—know as much about this operation as we do. It's a joint deal with the South Vietnamese. The ARVN's are like a telegram to the Cong. In many cases they are the Cong.

The whole goddamn thing had started when he got up earlier that morning. It had been 0400, dark, and lonely. The frigging map must have fallen out of his pocket when he rolled up his gear. Shit.

They had spent the previous night in an unremarkable village. Typical of those the battalion ran into and over during its sweeps. Two dozen huts

strung out along two interconnecting roads—really no more than widened dike tops meandering through the paddies. There was the obligatory French-built school house—the only solid-looking structure in the ville, but probably the most transient one to the villagers. Permanence in the village meant living from the land, not controlling or building on it. The school was unused, pockmarked by bullets and bomb fragments.

Each hut had a bomb shelter. No animals pecked along the paths. There were no young men.

The Marines—particularly the major—had been suspicious. The bomb shelters made the villagers “guilty” the same way Salem decided who the witches were. The innocent would drown while the witch survived. American bombs would kill innocents—survivors were Cong. It was a convenient interpretation. The problem was complex and unsolvable to the Americans. The need to assign guilt and innocence doomed their efforts to understand.

No young men. All off with the VC. Or perhaps hiding from the draft. Anybody’s draft—North, South, or Cong.

The Marines began by running their tracked, armored personnel tractors through several rice paddies, thus destroying months of life-or-death labor. Hardly the way to win hearts and minds. Nor was calling in artillery and naval gunfire just after leaving the ville.

Bork was at least partly responsible for that. He felt bad—guilty?—about it. A new feeling to an average twenty-four-year-old ice cream-fed example of college-trained American youth. Not guilty so much about the actual event—the destroyer off the beach firing twenty rounds into the village—as the carefree action with which he had followed the colonel’s suggestion to “blow away the ville.” He could have protested. It would not have done any good. But he could have protested, and in later years he would say he had.

At the time Bork had not given a second thought to calling in those rounds. He had never killed face to face. It was doubtful he ever would, although eight months remained of his

tour. There seemed little morality involved in talking into a radio handset. Anyone could do it.

After getting up that morning they walked for two hours through the dark and the sand. The departure landing zone—from which they would be lifted by helicopter to a new operating area—was on the beach. The beach was distinguished from the interior dunes and half-jungle by a line of scrub brush. He walked lonely, although in the actual middle of a group of 650 men. The sand was cold, the air thick, and the Marines around him uncaring except for a bootcamp-instilled fear of letting their buddies down. The Marine esprit tolerated death and incompetence, so long as sufficient grace was displayed to support the myth. Belief in the myth was extremely high, almost pure, in the novice. It declined to cynicism in the middle ranks—both enlisted and officer—where the work was done. Privates and lieutenants charged when they should have waited. Corporals and captains died taking hills that did not need to be taken. Increased belief in the myth was then required as rank increased and physical danger receded. The most gung ho marines were generals and administrative officers.

The beach was there when the sun came. Bork settled against a clump of brush. He and his two radiomen were in the Headquarters Company square, a dried out rice paddy. They sat diagonally opposite from where the XO established himself among radios and captains.

Bork flopped down, shrugged off pack and pistol belt, searched for matches, and discovered he had lost his map. It was the area they would land in that morning. Complete with codenames of units and checkpoints. Bork had even written radio frequencies and all signs on the map. A nice summary of the upcoming operation.

In spite of the information on it, Bork did not really think the map would help the VC. To assume that the map—if found by a VC sympathizer—could be transferred 8,000 meters to their next operating area, digested and used to plan a welcoming ambush—all this in four hours—was hard to believe.

The battalion commander had

already left on a helo surveillance of the new LZ. The XO had no difficulty in making the hard-to-believe assumption.

“God damn it. Do you think it’s in the ville?”

“Yes sir.”

“Shit. Find Lieutenant Norman.”

Bork stood unhappily in the sun. The Major continued scanning a map.

Norman arrived, wary and sweating. He was of medium height, stocky with light blue eyes and big ears. He walked with the certain grace Bork had noticed in a few of the other Marines. It seemed to come from comfort in the dirt and heat and danger. A sense of familiarity and satisfaction with and in the current edition of war. Their war.

“What’s happening, Major?”

“You have to go back to the ville.”

“Shithole is probably crawling with gooks by now.”

“Bork will go with you. You’re looking for a map. Be back in an hour and a half.”

Norman looked at Bork.

“Yes sir.”

Bork explained as they walked away.

“Goddamn it.”

“Yeah, I know.”

“My troops are just going to love you for this.”

“Well, what the hell can I say?”

“Borrow an M-16 from somebody. Leave your flak jacket and helmet here.”

They moved to where the recon platoon sat. Twelve Marines and one chu hoi—a VC turncoat, now scouting and interpreting for the Americans. As always, recon sat apart from the line grunts. They worked hard at their aura of eliteness. Not just for ego, but as a weapon in continued survival on dangerous and often unnecessary patrols. No helmets or flak jackets, non-regulation weapons.

Norman called them together and briefly explained the mission. Lieutenant (jg) Bork would accompany them. As he talked of the map the Marines looked at Bork. Incredulity turned to hate. Fear became resignation. The unspoken words made Bork miserable. “You dumb bastard. You stupid squid officer son of a bitch. We

have to risk our asses because of you.”

They formed up quickly and moved out. Ten meters between them, the point man twenty-five meters in front. Bork was halfway back in the column, between Norman and the chu hoi. The latter was carrying a .45 in his hand, loaded and cocked. It made Bork nervous. As soon as they walked through the battalion perimeter, the silence was there. The country—although traversed just hours before—was now threatening and strange.

The point man gave a “down” signal after twenty-five minutes. They had been moving very rapidly. Their green utilities were stained black where sweat outlined suspenders and bandoliers of ammunition.

Bork breathed heavily. He almost felt excited. The danger was there, but bearable. Incredibly, he was reminded of a John Wayne movie.

The point man and two other Marines moved slowly up to and through the village. They moved in a crouch, heads constantly turning, listening as hard as they could for the sound of an AK-47 being cocked or the pop of a mortar firing. They formed a loose line of listening posts on the ville’s inland side. At a signal from the platoon sergeant, four Marines moved out in a crouched trot. Soon there was a perimeter around the village. At least enough of one to give a warning.

The sergeant—a tall, skinny Mississippiian named Bell, with drooping mustache—led Bork, Norman, and the others into the village. They stopped in the slight square formed in front of the old school. No one was in sight. There was no noise.

Bork immediately went to the hooch where he had slept. Norman helped him search. No map. Back to the square.

“Any luck?” Bell asked.

“Not a fucking thing. See if you can get anybody out here.”

The chu hoi began speaking. By the third repetition of the Vietnamese phrase, he was shouting. Bork winced at the shrillness of his voice. It disturbed the calm and invited danger. He sat down and took a drink from his canteen. The water was foul with iodine.

Bork stood up. An old woman and man had appeared. Bell shouted “Didi moi,” and made a threatening gesture with his shotgun.

The two Vietnamese came up to them—terrified and hating and willing to say anything to please them and get them out of the village. The chu hoi began speaking. The melody went back and forth. Insistency was met with denials. The interpreter became strident. The old woman answered in anger and tears.

Other Vietnamese began appearing. Soon a dozen were in front of the school. Sergeant Bell spoke to the chu hoi.

“Tell them we want that map or we’ll burn down the village.” The chu hoi translated slowly. The people stirred. Bork saw no one leave, but articles were presented. An old air mattress, a helmet, several rounds of .50 caliber ammunition. No map.

Norman asked the time.

“We’ve been here eighteen minutes,” Bork answered.

Just then two women—one middle-aged and wrinkled, the other young and scared—walked into the square carrying a litter. It was an old poncho slung between two rough-cut poles.

“Need medic,” the younger one said.

Bork moved to the stretcher. A little girl lay on it. Nine or ten. Skinny but clean. Crying softly in gasps, her face screwed up and marked with pain lines.

“What’s wrong?” Bell asked. “Oh Christ. Hand me the first aid bag.”

Bell had laid back the little girl’s shirt. Her skin was smooth and brown. Just after it descended from her ribcage and stretched across the little girl’s stomach, the skin and flesh were torn and very slightly bleeding. Shell fragments, probably. The wound was fresh, the torn edges blue-white against the red.

Bork thought he would puke. He had seen wounded and dead. Only two weeks earlier he had walked unthinking past a foxhole containing three VC killed by a white phosphorus shell. There had been three black forms melted together. Only the stink had marked them as once living.

But here the hurting wound to Bork was the permanence of those pain lines. The irrationality of it was pure and absolute.

Sergeant Bell applied a hasty bandage. The little girl moaned but did not cry out. She did not seem particularly scared—just patient and hurt.

The first aid kit was handed to the old woman. Norman interrupted Bell’s medical instructions.

“Christ, tell them to get her to the hospital at Hoi An. We have to shag ass.”

A shot was fired on the west side of the village. The Vietnamese clamored and scattered. The pickets came running in: “At least six, moving on us.”

“Let’s get going. Double time.”

They left the ville. The little girl still lay on her litter in the open. Bork trotted behind Norman. After three hundred meters they slowed to a fast walk.

They were almost back to the beach. Bell suddenly spun to his right, shouted “there they are,” and began pumping shotgun shells into the brush twenty-five meters away.

No one gave a command. No one else fired. No one saw any VC or heard incoming fire. They simply began running.

They ran up to the battalion perimeter, shouting the day’s password. Bork’s hands trembled as he lit a cigarette. Water hurt going down. The major looked disgusted at their news.

Now, later that day, in the helo on its way to the new LZ, Bork again thought of the village and the little girl. He had called in naval gunfire. The VC had fired mortars the night before.

Bork jumped from the helo as it hovered two feet off the ground. A perimeter was long established. There was no activity. A radioman handed Bork the lost map, explaining that he had found it on the trail that morning. Bork told the major, who grunted. He did not tell Norman or the recon Marines. He never forgot the little girl.





PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID BRADFORD

SHIPS IN THE CITY

Spellbound in slumber, an angel of mercy
Or maybe death, she rests in soft repose
Upon my bed. I am but an anchor
For her dreams, holding the dark world close.

Ships pass with coaled fury into limbo
As faint horns heckle the incumbent night;
A lone star shines through the naked window,
Throwing into relief my solitude.

Love will not know our desperate embrace.
It is too tightly grounded in flesh, stoved
By bones and blood and old discarded clothes,
To freely sail on such a fabled sea.

Instead the night like a slow furtive pool
That breaks upon the neon glow, calmly
Drowns to sleep all sense seeking breath to ask
The worth of anchors raised on dreams that pass.

—John Sellers

ELEVATOR MAN

you must be
"on your way up?"
"push nine please." you say
nothing more.
i sigh.
remembering your easy smile
and graceful dreams
you carried in your eyes
and chin.
and i?
i a grayed lifeless cedar
rooted to my corner,
ground floor.

—Doug Knotts

A SONG FOR MY SON

Swish did you see it
Swirling around
Quick can you catch it
Going downtown
Pain can you feel it
Making you frown
It's the air that you breathe
The ground at your feet
Your birthday's tomorrow
Your growth is complete
Now you can do it
All on your own
Can you do what we've taught you
The way you've been shown
Swoosh it passed by
You missed it my friend
Quick can you catch it
It's coming again
With age you will feel it
Better wait until then
Let it grow and enjoy
Till you're no more a boy.

—Robby Bellah

THE InSidious EnCyclopEdia

-collegiate additions-

BY PAYTON VANZANT

COLLEGE: A home for the criminally literate. Since I am writing these entries to the *Insidious Encyclopedia* especially for colleges and/or universities, it is only fitting that the first entry be about colleges and/or universities.

Webster's Student Dictionary, First Edition, equates college to university; but of course, *Webster's Student Dictionary, First Edition*, is so old that one may easily argue that it is totally out of date and not applicable here. It doesn't even use *ə*'s in its pronunciations (which is slightly off the point but I thought it was interesting). Actually, I am using *Webster's Student Dictionary, First Edition*, because it is the only dictionary I have handy at the moment.

Therefore, assuming that the word *college* has a meaning equivalent to the word *university*, I won't have to write a separate entry for universities. That is much easier for me.

Now, all the Webster's dictionaries from the *First Caveman's Guide To Words*, which included fifty words with definitions and thirteen full color pictures and several raunchy looking black and white diagrams (it was a very primitive dictionary), to the most modern, up-to-date *Webster's Collegiate* agree that the word *college* is derived from the Latin word *collegium*, which meant society, and that word was from another Latin word, *collega*, which meant colleague. Now, as far as I know, a college is not necessarily a society and I don't believe it is necessarily a colleague. Actually, the whole idea is very confusing.

Failing to grasp the etymology of

the word *college*, I now turn to its meaning. Truthfully, after being in college for two years, I really don't know what the meaning of it is. It's supposed to be an institution of higher learning; but, what I can't figure out is—higher than what?

But seriously, I have learned many important things in college which have readied me for life—things such as how to aim paper airplanes, where to find illegal copies of tests, how to take notes while 3/4 asleep, not to write 3/4 as 3/4 in manuscripts but as "three-fourths," and there's no use in trying to find anyone if you need him. College is also a place where one learns character and how to streak.

If I have helped you understand anything at all about colleges and/or universities, I am glad; but, if you really understand about it now, maybe you could help me a bit.

ELEVATOR: A machine which drives people up walls. A product of man's technological genius which might have been done without. As it is, man has come to the point that, with his huge skyscrapers, he must either put up with the elevators or build enough muscles to climb several miles of stairs daily. The tailoring industry would probably soar as the result of the latter case because of an explosive demand for size XXXX pants. (Not to mention what would happen to the men!)

An elevator is a cage, connected to motors (which raise and lower it at the wrong times) and enclosed in a shaft that runs vertically through the building in which it is used. A button is pushed in order to summon an elevator, but, unknown to the weary pedestrian, it is really connected to a light which alerts the front office of the

building to a monitor which is, in turn, connected to a camera aimed at said pedestrian. This monitor is called the Laugh Box and is effective in raising morale, in the front office workers as they watch the antics of irate pedestrians.

The word *elevator*, by the way, is derived from the word *elevate* because the machine is designed to elevate its contents from one floor of the building to the next. (The elevation is physical, not mental!)

GRADING SYSTEMS: As a student of a college, I am not in a position to discuss grading systems in specific terms, but I believe I can manage to stay out of trouble if I keep to the general side of things.

First, there are three types of grading systems: 1) the Good Grading System or GGS, 2) the Bad Grading System or BGS, and 3) the Intermediate Grading System or IGS. The GGS and the BGS do not exist and are only ideals. The IGS, unfortunately, does exist.

There are reasons for the nonexistence of the GGS and BGS. No grading system can really be Good on the assumption that you can't please all of the people all of the time and somebody is going to end up displeased with the grading system they are subjected to. On the other hand, no grading system can be bad because it is quite necessary. Now, I'm sure you want to ask, "Why are grading systems necessary?"—don't.

There is, of course, one case of a man, Will Gradewrite, who claimed to have found THE GGS. Unfortunately, in trying to utilize his grading system, he suffered some mental impairment and is not expected to leave the Werber Sanitarium within the next

thirty years. By the time he is released, if he is ever released, he will have forgotten his system.

So much for the GGS; now, for the IGS. (The BGS is really not important enough to go into.) I asked a professor (who will remain nameless) to explain his grading system to me, and, though I failed to take notes, I believe I have the information correct.

"I first take down the grades in group one, which are the important indicators (I.I.'s to those who are close to grading system analysis) and scale them along the bell curve until I fill it up. The rest of the grades go on the clapper. (I think the last comment was a joke.) Then you take the exemplary torsion scores—you, of course, know what an exemplary torsion score is (I assured him that I did, though I did not. I didn't want him to think he had the upper hand in the conversation.)—well, I take them and divide the grade into ten equal parts. The number of the division into which a particular grade falls is then taken and, with the important indicators, corrected by scaling, used to find the final grade by the formula—(I did not remember the formula but it was half a page long and I'm sure you don't want to see it anyway.)

GRAFFITI: The handwriting on the wall. Other than baseball and football, graffiti is America's number one pastime. Graffiti artists are common in truck stops, subways, college campuses—in short, in every public place known to man (and a few unknown to man). Of course wall writing is most concentrated in restrooms. This is probably due to the huge amount of time that the mind spends in such places which would otherwise be idly spent.

Now, I raise the question—why do people write on walls? One answer seems to be that graffitists are insecure. They are afraid the wall will fall and the ink makes the wall a little less wall-like.

Others like to exercise their originality. Unfortunately, there is a general lack of originality nowadays.

Still others like to work out their frustrations on walls, with drawings turning into bas-relief as the graffitist

grinds away mercilessly. Next to pigeons, frustrated graffitists are the most destructive force normally acting on walls which man or nature has to offer.

Now, I offer some of the less obscene messages I have found on walls:

"Don't write on the walls." (This wasn't written; it was scribed.)

"We are the people our parents warned us against." (Don't you just love originality?)

Ply and reply:

"Down with varsity; up with academia."

"Probably 30, bald, and lazy."

"No, 22, tall and handsome, actually. Jogs 2 miles daily. Has 2.62 overall"

"Humble, too."

"What? Me conceited? Never! I'm too nice and upstanding to be conceited."

"They've started writing on the wall again. Long Live Graffiti!"

RAIN: A condensation of atmospheric water vapor in the form of water droplets large enough to fall downward due to Earth's gravitational field. (Unless you live in Australia. In this case, the rain falls up.) Rain almost invariably comes from clouds. This is one of those rules of meteorology which rarely goes awry. Such events as people kicking buckets of water from airplanes may produce an effect similar to rain, but, as it is likely to contain a large quantity of metal, this cannot be truthfully called rain.

The word *rain* originated as the Old English word *re3n*. (No need to rush out and buy new eye glasses. That 3 is actually there and it is not a misprint. In Old English, or as it is sometimes called, Merry Old England, 3 was a letter which was equivalent to the regular English -si- as in *vision*.) Down through history, the word has changed to *ren*, *rein*, *re3n*, *rayn*, *reyn*, *reynne*, *rene*, *rane*, *raine*, and finally, *rain*. Most of these weird spelling can be blamed on Merry Old England and Geoffrey Chaucer. The Old High German equivalent of *rain* was *regan*, but then you can expect virtually anything from an Old High German.

Synonyms for *rain* are: *mist*, which is a fine rain especially capable of getting

into sinuses to cause unbearable agony; *drizzle*, which is a little more than a mist (more what? more rain?); *shower*, which is a rain consisting of large drops; *sprinkle*, which is a minor shower; *downpour*, which causes undue distress in kids which causes undue distress in mothers; *cloudburst*, which is a type of rain which has a tendency to spread from downpour at one extreme to tidal wave at the other; and several obscene designations which I will not list here because of certain implications to some social orders. These latter synonyms arise from the ability of rain to soak clothes, hair, sinuses, and patio parties. Rain might be called *the Wet Blanket*.

Rain is measured in inches as rainfall and reported to the public by television on a big board, generally by a beautiful girl decked out in a mini-skirt or bikini (which might account for the fact that the majority of men consider rainfall as negligible).

The point on Earth with the highest known average rainfall is Mt. Waialeale, Hawaii, which gets an average of 460 inches annually. (Perhaps this should be Isle Waialeale!)

Rain has also been used to designate any material which may fall from the sky. An example is the rain of blood so common in Exodus, Mythology, and hospitals.

I might sum all the above up by saying, "Rain is a very wet subject," but I won't.

SEX: I am sure that this entry will shock those who know me best, or maybe it won't. But it'll probably shock those who know me just a little. Still, let it be known that I am writing this only in the best interest of the reader and I will try to stay as clean and biologically accurate as possible. To start with, I was planning to write an entry on women, but, what with Women's Lib, that could be dangerous; not that I have anything against Women's Lib, provided that it doesn't change the basics of sex—and as far as I know, Women's Lib has absolutely nothing to do with sex change.

First, I wish to say that the whole business of human sexuality has no

connection whatsoever with birds and bees. They just get in the way. No, the basis of human sexuality is the fact that there are two types of human beings—male and female (man and woman, if you please). Though these two types rarely agree and fight often (Thus, the war between the sexes. Man says that Woman is illogical. Woman says that Man is obstinate. The latter is ridiculous and no one could convince me otherwise.), they find it quite unbearable to stay apart. Of course, as

soon as they get together again, they start fighting, but I am told that such separations are good for a budding relationship. "Absence makes the heart grow fonder," I think the old saying goes. I give you the case of Martha Margleburg, age 22, who separated from her fiancé. After just three days, her heart grew so fond that she sent him a sixty dollar gift. (It exploded promptly on opening.) She grew quite fond of explosives and later became an expert in demolition.

I wish I had the data to write a book on this subject but—alas!—not so. I will, however, refer those who are interested to the book, *Is Sex Necessary?*, by James Thurber and E.B. White. This book is slightly behind the times but it holds a wealth of wisdom for the curious or the just plain dirty-minded.

So much for that.



OFF THE TOP OF MY HEAD

Desperate: from being used
Surprised: when he came
living it up and out for a good time

Not worrying about distance;
distance pranced.

And I said Good-bye with a smile
But, an impression
AHHHHHHhhhhhhh, returning and
Now; confused.
Poets say he's the one
and I wonder.
Expressionists explain I shouldn't so I'm not
Peers say I do; so I am?

Who am I? I like it because I don't
understand it.
Today was Monday or someday. I who am!
He relinquished whom: But is conceited

still.

One was a mountain; aggressive and
slight the tree, but made from the

rich
moist
soil

from Our land.
Butterfly's wings as free as the Wind. If you love
there is a chance
you may fly,

If you fall; well, you
fall.

Trees are the mountain and I am the
selfish and deceiving river,

"It can't be helped."

—Kim Grubbs

THE MAINTENANCE OF CREDIBILITY

FICTION BY JIM SHOFFNER

Ron leaned forward slightly, trying to adjust the station-selector knob while keeping his eyes on the dark, dangerously rain-slicked road ahead of him. Damn these hick radio stations, he thought. They either close down at sunset or are so wrapped up in twangy country music that they couldn't care less about broadcasting any news. He turned the knob clockwise, a little more, picked up an announcer's voice, turned the knob back a little, forward a little, and stopped. It sounded like a local news program:

"The state's highways are being heavily traveled and in many areas dampened by showers as the long Labor Day weekend draws to a close. The traffic death toll now stands at twelve. The Regional Safety Council has estimated that thirteen persons will die in state mishaps during the holiday period, which began at six p.m. Friday and ends at midnight tonight." The announcer paused. "And now, with more music, here's one from not too long ago ..."

The radio lapsed into the Carpenters singing "Rainy Days and Mondays," and Ron held his wristwatch up to the light from a passing car. It was six minutes past eleven. That must've been just the end of the eleven o'clock news, he thought. It figured. But at least he'd found a station that wouldn't be playing that country music crap all night.

Outside, the pelting rain was illuminated and transformed into sparkling halos in the glare of his headlights. The yellow dividing line,

also illuminated in front of the car, flashed by along the wet and empty pavement.

Ron thought how lucky he had been to find out about this neglected road that was almost a straight shot between Hailey City and Gideon. With the usual holiday traffic he would've been probably a quarter of an hour later getting back to his apartment and to bed. But on this stretch he had seen only a handful of cars for the last twenty miles or so. Maybe it was no wonder, he thought, considering the pock-marked paving, crumbling shoulders, and the constant downpour that made driving even more difficult. But it was worth it just to avoid the drunks on the main road.

Something flashed in the corner of Ron's eye. He glanced at the rear-view mirror and saw the rotating blue light of a state trooper's car, partially eclipsed behind a curve, come into view and draw up quickly behind him. There was no siren—just the light—but it was clear what the trooper wanted.

Ron instinctively looked down at his speedometer. The needle was receding from forty as he eased up on the accelerator. I couldn't've been doing more than forty-two or forty-three, he thought, but they must mean me because I'm the only one on the road. He cursed at the thought of hassling over a ticket.

Ron braked, pulled his car over off the shoulder and stopped. He was reaching for his wallet when a gloved hand tapped on the window. Ron lowered it a couple of inches, trying to

let in as little rain as possible.

"Good evening, sir. Could I see your driver's license, please?"

That's what they always do, Ron thought as he opened his wallet. They never tell you what you were doing or why they pulled you over, they just want to see your license. And they always call you "sir."

"Take it out, please."

Ron took the card out of its plastic holder and handed it through the window to the officer, who took it back to his car and got in. Ron rolled up the window, then turned in his seat and tried to see what the officer was doing, but could only make out two figures in the car, heads together as if plotting how much to exaggerate the speeding charge. The blue-white light was still throbbing atop the silvery gray Ford Galaxie, its strobe mechanism casting mute, lightning-like bursts which illuminated the close woods on both sides of the road.

A door slammed and Ron saw the raincoated figure of the officer walk forward. He lowered the window again.

"You were exceeding the speed limit back there, sir. I'm required by law to present you with this summons to appear in court."

Ron took his license, now blotched with rain, and glanced at the slip of paper with it. The carbon-traced handwriting said he had been traveling sixty-two miles per hour in a fifty-five zone. Goddamn it, Ron thought, that's a twenty-mile-an-hour lie. His throat tensed and he started to say something,

but suddenly realized that arguing with a state trooper wouldn't help his case when it came up, and might even lead to more trouble.

"Uh, officer," Ron said, trying to be polite, "I really don't think I was doing this much."

"Sir?"

"I don't think I was doing this much. Sixty-two. Are you sure I was going that fast?"

"You may question that in court, sir. The date is on the ticket."

Ron sighed. "All right, officer," he said, and started to roll up the window. "Sir?"

Ron stopped and looked at the officer, who was now crouched down to window level and was looking into the car.

"Yes?"

"You are alone, aren't you, sir? You the only one in the car?"

"Yeah. Uh, why?"

The trooper straightened up. "Thank you, sir. Good evening," he said, and walked back to his car. Ron heard the door slam.

Whoever might be in here with me is none of your goddamn business, Ron muttered as he cranked the engine and pulled back onto the road. Just who the hell do you think you are? he silently demanded as he watched the flashing blue light fade into the dreary distance behind him. The troopers must still be parked, he thought, or maybe they've turned around and gone to hunt down some other inno-

cent citizen and screw him for thirty or forty dollars, too. But that wasn't the worst part. What was really unfair, what really ground into the gut, was that it would be the trooper's word against his own—the trooper and his partner, that is. That's probably why he wanted to make sure there was no one else in the car, so there wouldn't be anyone to back up a claim of driving at forty-two instead of sixty-two. The lying bastard. Well, that was another hunk of money as good as gone.

A sign appeared in the beam of his headlights. Four more miles. So much for saving time, Ron thought. Whatever mileage he'd saved did a hell of a lot of good on this lousy speed-trap of a road. Might've had better luck with the drunks on the main drag. Ron looked at the speedometer and realized he'd been creeping along since he left the trooper, and pressed a little harder on the accelerator.

The needle was inching toward thirty-five when a tremendous, jarring blow threw Ron against the steering column. He heard the grinding screech of metal against metal, and glanced back.

There was someone behind him, almost on top of him, driving without lights.

Ron gripped the steering wheel with both hands as his car met the gravel of the left shoulder, then the right, weaving back and forth like a panicked beast. Another blow, and Ron heard glass shatter as the car lurched to one

side. He saw a bridge ahead—a small one—and he struggled at the wheel, trying to right the car.

The dark hulk slammed again into the rear, this time lifting the back wheels clear of the plank roughness of the bridge. Ron had time only to wonder where the hell the troopers were, as his automobile splintered an antiquated wood railing and met the cool, dark waters below.

Ron had time only to wonder, and to glimpse—briefly, without understanding—the reflections of his own headlights as they played on the surfaces of a silvery gray Ford Galaxie, and the blue dome of plexiglass which surmounted it.

From *The Wellenton Advertiser*:

THIRTEEN DIE IN HOLIDAY MISHAPS

A traffic accident in Cox County has raised the state's Labor Day weekend accidental death toll to 13.

State Troopers said a 20-year-old college student was killed late Monday night when his car plunged off a bridge into Talasulga Creek. His name is being withheld.

The Regional Safety Council had predicted 13 traffic fatalities this Labor Day weekend. The student's death makes this the eighth consecutive year in which the council's predictions have been correct

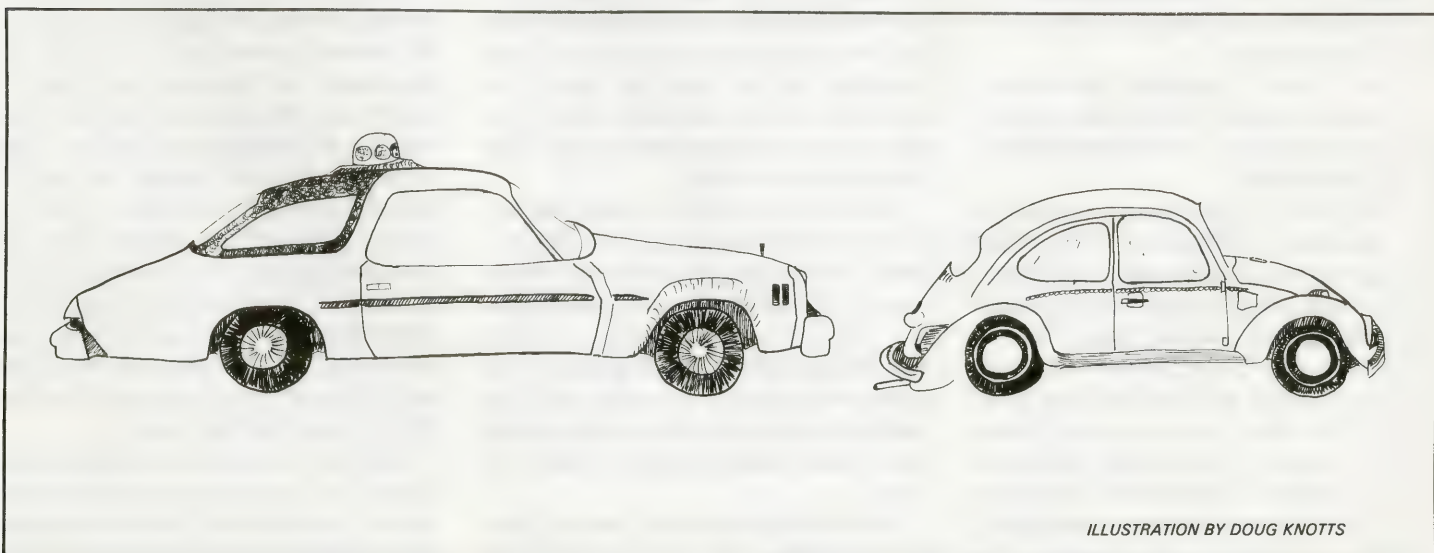
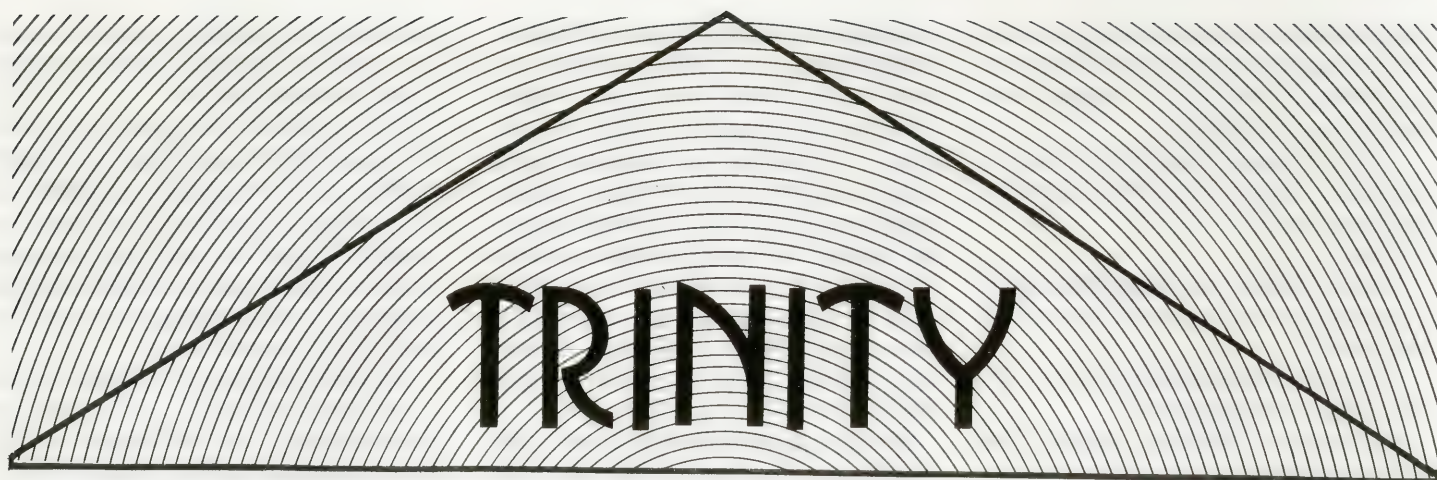


ILLUSTRATION BY DOUG KNOTTS



FICTION BY JOHN WILLIAMS

I

Far from our own postage stamp of native universe, in a distant globular elliptical galaxy, there is a moderate orange-red star of type M. As a star, it is respectably unspectacular. It creates light and heat and seems to never shrink or expand. It rages and remains. In every way it is typical and without distinction except for one extraordinary fact: it is not merely a star; it is a sun—the sun for the three planets of identical size, shape, and composition which move around it. And more incredibly still, around each of the planets themselves there revolves a large golden moon; three identical moons in three identical orbits around three identical planets spinning in celestial slow motion around an orange-red sun. The arrangement, in its symmetry, is a unique marvel in a random universe.

The three planets however—although identical physically—are in every other way, for reasons unclear, quite dissimilar.

First, there is Jhor. Jhor is the home of dawning civilization. There are three centers on Jhor where conditions were once propitious to the issuance of life, three rich alluvial valleys where the tribes now farm and hunt fish, and retire at nights to the fires near their tents. Our story involves one of these fertile basins, somewhat north of Jhor's equator, where the ripened river land, like the seasonable converging of signs and herbs in the hands of a

sorceress, once lay back its body in the heat of summer, groaned, and gave birth. At that particular spot, among the multiplying members of his tribesmen, our first hero had just arrived at his third Jhorite year. His name was Zak.

It was early in the evening, warm and quiet by the low fires. Supper was over. The males sat silently and comfortably, slightly aloof, with their eyes focused far across the rolling plain, on the horizon. The females sat closer to the fires, humble and reverent, their eyes, too, to the east. The Jhorites are primitive, simple, and worshipful. They glow in the glorious mystery around them and delight in the simplicity of unconfusion. Jhorites are creatures of extremes without subtlety.

Zak too, nestled in the softness of his mother, drugged and enclosed in the community of his race, with embers of the fire dancing in his eyes and dark shadows etched on his face, sat motionless in wonder and watched the spectacle in the late eastern sky. The full moon was rising.

But it was no ordinary rising moon. This was the Jhorite moon—it filled a tenth of the sky; the looming Jhorite moon, full and fertile, in its closest pass to Jhor. It was huge, round, motionless—alluring and golden with streaks red as blood in an egg yolk. Zak hardly dared to breathe in the silence as he stared, fascinated in an ecstasy of fear.

Zak felt his mother all around him, the enfolding of love—security in

belonging, secure though the world was silent under the rising moon. Nothing did the silence utter, beyond the crackling of the fires, but all was complete by the fires this night. The entire world was the realm of a child, and Zak watched as the moment did not vanish, etched forever in his mind.

II

On Rune at that moment, in a small meadow by a pond behind a house in the country side, far away from the noise of the mad city, Zeeb walked with his girl Zarla. Early evening, the world stretched across its ocean sky endless blue dark with stars outshone by the glowing moon. The glowing rising blood-gold moon of Rune.

Zeeb was a young Runite. He studied during the days with no plan. He learned about his civilization; he examined the triumphs and failures and found them interesting. He made friends and thought, sometimes with wonder, about his world; he peered into the ocean of the heavens and, at times, watched the ghostly slices of Jhor and Marele, wondering if life was there. He fell in love at last with Zarla, and rubbed his hand up and down her side as they walked across the meadow in the light of the rising moon—golden life, reflected in the pond.

They sat and embraced a long, long time—far away from the madness and greed, together one of the fragrances of contentment in the air with promise

that the magic night, just begun, would never end. Zeeb's passion collected inside him and anesthetized his mind: He melted into Zarla.

"No, Zeeb," she whispered, stretching into long hours her minutes. She delicately curbed him, brought him to her breast—golden in the light—and stroked his hair. She drugged him, and lifted her eyes.

"Just look at it," she sighed. "Hanging there. It's singing, do you hear it?" Zeeb sighed.

"So beautiful. It makes me float away." She leaned back her head and swayed, her hands soft on Zeeb's face, serene as a child's. "It's singing about Heaven, do you hear it?"

"Heaven?" Zeeb murmured.

"It's inviting us to fly away, beyond it. Don't you hear? Far, far away—a magic voyage through this night. Don't you see it shining way beyond the ocean? I feel lonesome sometimes."

Zeeb opened his eyes. "Lonesome?" The question, forgetting its doubt, trailed away. "I'd be lonesome if the moon left," Zeeb said thoughtfully. "Then we'd be all alone." He pressed himself closer into Zarla. For a moment he clutched her desperately, then at length, relaxed. "I know," he said, "Sometimes I do wish we could fly there. For a little while—for as long as we wanted. And not come back until we wanted to."

A long while they were silent. "Let's fly away," Zarla said at last. "Fly away across the sky."

A razor of uneasiness sliced Zeeb's mind as it blinked and groped for words. "But we belong here," he said. "We belong to each other right here. We have a reason to be here—each other. I don't want to fly away. I want to stay here—forever."

"But there, nothing dies," Zarla said. "Flowers never fall, fruit never rots. There is no young, no old; no time. Every day is a rebirth. There is no pain, no death. Nothing but joy. Nothing dies."

Hiding, as if lurking for the exact moment, the thought came forward and Zeeb shivered. "No," he said, our love will never, ever die. Never. I'm afraid to fly away—it's too deep. It's too deep. I'm afraid. I want to be here with you forever."

Zarla did not answer, and her hands enclosed Zeeb's face. The magic air was motionless, eternal. As if there were no conquest, Zeeb thought, no seasons. It was impossible that these triumphant moments of eternity could fade, could decay into modules of repetition. Impossible. Time simply could not advance. No moment could possibly be longer, no moon more golden, no love more magic. And the moon cleared the trees.

III

Old Zune, unloved, sat according to his custom on the balcony outside his room and casually watched with pleasure and pain the day again in cycle fall to night. The full moon of Marele rose across the unreal silver towers of the city, giant liquid scarlet gold. Zune was not impressed. He breathed the vapors of his evening Portion with indifference and leaned back.

A time-bound window on her old inutile voyage, he thought with a faint smile. Still a painted whore. Zune laughed to himself and looked away.

The door, inside, came open and a Marelian in white came through. He adjusted the temperature and humidity controls for the night and observed the immaculate capsule room. How incredible, he thought, how simply incredible.

"Come!" Zune called from the balcony. The Marelian in white stepped through the outer screen.

"Yes, your highness."

Zune despised the creature and did not look at him.

"I'll take my Amusements early," he instructed.

"Of course, your highness." The Marelian in white disappeared.

A smile of irony twisted Zune's lip. The programmed fool, he thought. As if I didn't know. But better than a savage. Or a drooling Runite. All fools.

The moon, losing its glow and taking on a whiter, more pallid light as the night progressed, palely illuminated the sallow face, vegetated in the calciferous eyes, and was not noticed.

A pet Zune was, sustained and kept comfortable: offerings from the fools

in exchange for his sedentary existence. Because they could never bear to see me die, Zune thought with a smile. They are afraid. And I remain until I alone decide it's time. I am the last and only. Zune clasped the delectable thought and drew out its pleasure slowly—the pleasure that each day with Zune's patience grew less.

Sterile Zune, compartmentalized, locked away (as he wished) from them all; locked away as secure as any lord in a manor, any pariah in a cell.

But the pain. They all have their drugs and I have mine. The drug of exclusive knowledge. I am the godhead in this trivium of Grand Absurdity. The little particles of dust revolving around me, sharp points dulled by drugs into teeth of gears in a machine that produces what it consumes. A Perfect Harmony—like gears in a machine, atoms in a molecule, stars in a universe, ingredients in a perfect soup, offered in awe and in hope, but never eaten. They are plants that grow toward light; they are all going to Heaven. Their drugs are my drug, for my drug is the power of knowledge. Zune knew that he alone knew.

And there is nothing they can do. From the lowest to the highest—nothing at all. All power is beneath me, for no power can eradicate what has been known. They all belong securely and portion out their fear. Membrane ion transport depolarize; .0005 sec.; synapse, hydrolyze; rise return rise return, tick tock tick tock, whenever I decide. And all I did was know.

The moment passed; the moon laid her child to sleep content, left her glory beneath the bed, ran out of time and turned her head, then drowned herself in the ocean of the sky. The Marelian in white softly reappeared.

"Your Amusements, highness," he said and handed Zune the evening puzzles.

Zune did not look up and the servant withdrew. Zune stared across the city. Whenever I decide, he thought with a smile. Not until I say it's time.

The servant took one last glance at the comfort controls, smiled to himself and shook his head, locking the door behind him.



Exercise

and the Wickedness of Man

BY WILLIAM H. DAVIS

Exercise is a truly dirty word for most people. For most of us, getting out of bed in the morning is more than enough exercise for the whole day. H.L. Mencken used to say that the only exercise he got was attending the funerals of his friends who exercised. And I once knew a man who sometimes had these terrible cravings for vigorous exercise come over him. He said that when such cravings hit him, he would lie down and take a nap. Usually by the time he woke up the craving would have passed.

So most people are not very excited by the prospect of exercise. But what if we sweetened the pot with a little bribe? What if we promised people that if they would get up every morning at six o'clock and do one hour of vigorous exercise, including twenty minutes of jogging, the following results could be absolutely guaranteed: a twenty-five percent improvement in one's sense of well-being; a twenty-five percent improvement in one's ability to get along with people; a twenty-five percent improvement in I.Q.; and a twenty-five percent improvement in general health?

The truth is, of course, that most people would not take the trouble to do an hour of exercise even if these wonderful results could be guaranteed. I am afraid that this tells us a sad story about human nature.

Actually, these "guaranteed" results are not out of the question. In fact, they are probably not far from the results that actually accrue to dedicated exercisers. But apparently most people feel no great need for a twenty-five percent improvement in their intelligence or health or their sense of well-being.

Their sense of well-being is improved quite sufficiently by lying in bed an extra hour every morning.

Question: Would you do an hour of exercise every morning for a *one hundred percent* improvement in all of the areas mentioned?

This would surely tempt more people, but still I doubt that any great number would stick to the exercise program, particularly when winter came along and a long run of bad weather struck.

But now here is my clinching proposition: Would you take on this strenuous, early morning exercise program for *twenty-five dollars a day*?

The money is to be paid only at the end of 365 days of *consecutive* exercise, and *all* of the money will be forfeited if any day is missed, except for illness. At the end of 365 days, you would receive \$9,125.

Now I am confident that we will get some takers. The thought of earning twenty-five dollars for an hour's discomfort will be enough to get many and perhaps most people out of bed. This shows that people value money more than they do their health, their intelligence, and their sense of well-being.

But in reality, how many people do you suppose would be willing to stick even to this program day in and day out, good weather and bad, until the whole 365 days had gone by? Would people be able to succeed at such a program even for the sake of money? How about those parties that go on till one or two in the morning? Those morning-afters are going to be pretty grim. My experience with people—and to tell the truth, with myself—suggests that not more than sixty percent of the healthy population would persevere with the exercise program long enough to collect their money. And I wouldn't be surprised if the

percentage were as low as thirty percent. People are incredibly self-indulgent. And remember we are not now talking about such trivial rewards as vast improvements in health, wit, or well-being; we are talking about *cash money*, filthy mammon.

Sometimes I think that if you offered people a million dollars if they would just get up on *one* day at 4 a.m. and jog for an hour, probably five or ten percent of the people would sleep through. Such shiftlessness is of course disgusting. But we are all guilty in principle. Not only are we little interested in helping other people, we won't even go to very much trouble to help ourselves.

Why do so many of us neglect even our own welfare and our own self-interest? This is a hard question, and there's no easy answer to it. You can say it's just an irreducible mystery. You can say that free will is truly free and can't be explained. But what about all the people who *want* to do the good, who heartily *resolve* to do the good, who to some extent actually *do* it and *persevere* in doing it, but then finally lapse?

This is the story of practically every man. Certainly it's true of most people addicted to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, food, coffee, naps, procrastination, knuckle popping, and every other bad habit in the book.

I always think of my saintly grandmother. She was the only person I ever knew who positively *loved* to break bad habits. Of course, she didn't *have* any bad habits to speak of. But she would sincerely beg us to tell her of any annoying trait we detected in her. If we did, she would ruthlessly undertake to root it out. The only bad habit she wouldn't give up was that of wanting and expecting everyone around her to be perfect, too. I can tell you for

sure that's not easy to live with. Especially if you haven't got to the point where, like her, you just love to break bad habits.

I can't get over the feeling that there must be some magic way to change one's outlook, some new way of looking at things, some gimmick, some way of positive thinking, that will turn one's duties into pleasures and make it easy and joyous to do the good. Let's face it: if it all comes down in the end to gritting our teeth and summoning up our will power, our prospects are not very encouraging. Practically everyone admits that. But if there's

some easy way to con ourselves into doing the good, Alcoholics Anonymous hasn't found it.

Dr. Maxwell Stillman (I think that was his name) who wrote a very famous, best-selling book on dieting, says in that book that some people, once they get started dieting and losing weight, become truly joyful and exhilarated. They come to love their diets, and they are filled with a fierce resolution to resist forbidden foods. At this point the dieter is home free. He *loves* dieting. The mere thought of eating forbidden foods is disgusting. He is filled with a new pride and self-

respect that he wouldn't trade for all the chocolate in the world.

A blessed condition certainly. But how to get oneself into this frame of mind is a mystery still. For most of us, exercise and dieting and all the other virtues are hard to come by. Perhaps there is no one answer for everyone. Perhaps there are as many methods as there are people, and the only answer is to keep looking and trying until grace finally strikes. In the meantime, I feel a real need for some milk and cookies and a long nap.



I AM BELITTLED

I am belittled
Let me now wear a shroud
Made of the torn feathers of vultures
I wore them made from the falling wings of angels
And expected to fly.
One cannot change
But he can adapt,
An alternative readily available
And painfully overlooked by those
Who are kings.
Those who are fools
Need no wings.
Nor do they need to soar.
I shall let you be
All that you are
For I have no choice.
I have overlooked that two-fourths is also
One-half
As you are and will remain to be.
If I find more suitable wings
I may swoop down from below
And offer my thanks
And also apologize if time has not done so
Most of all and most nobly important
I will give you my best wishes
However faulty and painful they have proven to be
Take these three as they are
There is nothing deeper than face value.
We live in a kingdom where
The fools are wise
And the kings are kings.
Nothing less
Nothing more.

—Skip Bishop

I FIND GREAT PLEASURE

I find great pleasure

Under a stone,
In the shadows of the Milky Way,

In nature's most subtle beauty—

An ant's endeavors,
Cedar logs,
A mosquito at the fountain,

Clusters of five, seven, nine, eleven, thirteen
Long serrate leaves
On a slender stalk.

—David Thomas Street

VEGETABLE SILENCE

to sit here at supper doing nothing
watching the radio silence
the curtains stilling their smug waves
to watch me committing nothing

things vanish in the making
once started they are never the same
to sit between nothing
doing less is not to be there at all

the dinner never recognizes me
the vegetables, like old friends,
steam in conversation
while i witness from frantic nothingness
their peculiar silence

—Tracy Lea

THE ART OF RUBBING



BY CATHY LUKA

Contrary to what the title may imply, this article is not a quick course in body massage. "Rubbing" is the technique of copying a design from a carved surface. Long before printing presses were invented, the ancient Chinese used this process to reproduce and spread important writings. Later when rubbing was no longer crucial for communication, it developed into a Chinese art form. The most outstanding and best known Chinese rubbings are those taken from a series of designs picturing the sixteen Lo-Han, the disciples of Buddha.

Beautiful rubbings like those of the Lo-Han are surprisingly easy to make and are an inexpensive way to decorate your dorm room or apartment. Several methods can be used, the simplest of which is the dry technique. Materials needed for this

method can be found practically anywhere: a carved surface to copy, some kind of light-weight paper (for example typing paper) on which to transfer the design, masking tape to hold the paper in place, and pencils (preferably colored pencils), crayons, or chalk to bring out the design. The originality of the rubbing depends on the selection of a carved surface. Any object with an interesting surface will work—leather purses, carved jewelry boxes, and coins make excellent subjects. Surprising patterns can be created from manhole covers, fencing, signs, leaves, or grave headstones.

To make your own rubbings:

1. Clean the surface thoroughly. Very dirty surfaces, such as headstones, may have to be washed or scraped.

2. Place the paper on the surface to

be rubbed. The paper should be perfectly flat. Attach the paper to the surface by placing pieces of masking tape opposite one another. If wrinkles appear, remove them by peeling the tape off the surface and smoothing the paper from the center out.

3. Take the crayon or pencil and carefully rub it on the paper's surface. Work delicately from the center out. The raised areas of the design underneath will appear on the paper.

4. After the design is established, rub the entire surface again, this time pressing heavily.

5. When complete, remove the rubbing by carefully peeling the masking tape off the paper.





A KIND OF ALCHEMY

I am building a tower,
 cementing together
 anything
 I can find
 or that is given me.
 I'm using everything:
 tin cans and jars
 wingbones of an albatross
 pieces of your old toys
 broken cornerstones
 bumpers of abandoned cars.
 I tell you
 I'm using anything:
 words of hate
 words of love
 a stare
 a touch
 a dream of doves,
 I'm building a tower,
 restructuring debris
 toward the sky.

—A. J. Wright

ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR



PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID BRADFORD

BALLAD OF THE HONKY-TONK SALOON

I have stumbled down so many roads searching for a key
 To the door that will lead me away from here
 Drawn through the night by a flickering light floating in a foggy sea,
 Seeking only peace of mind and a way that's clear.
 But the highway runs in circles
 And the doors all slam too soon...
 As lamplight pours through the swinging doors
 Of the Honky-Tonk Saloon.

A woman leaning hard in the doorway
 Slouches as she beckons through the haze,
 Grabs her sagging breasts and begs someone to touch her
 As she falls back into the barroom in a daze.
 While outside in the muddy streets,
 Dogs are baying at the moon
 That dances on the rotten roof
 Of the Honky-Tonk Saloon.

The room is filled with smoke to the ceiling
 As the Saturday crowd rushes in,
 The House-girls hurriedly rouge up their coarse wilted faces,
 And the owner signals the gambler to begin.
 There are shiny diamond rings on every finger,
 And his corpse eyes glow with a hungry buzzard's stare;
 When a cowboy knocks his bottle off the table,
 He picks the bones clean and leaves them lying there.
 And a jagged bottle full of broken dreams
 Lies beside the brass spittoon
 That sparkles up the sawdust floor
 Of the Honky-Tonk Saloon.

Well the fear of failure brings on so much failure,
And the fear of being hurt causes so much pain.
That's why some men sell their souls for a dollar
While their brothers crawl the gutters in the rain.
That's why the undertaker has to muffle a laugh
As he waits behind your tomb,
In the saints' and sinners' graveyard beside
The Honky-Tonk Saloon.

A tired piano player in the corner
Wrings his heart out for people who cannot hear,
And the empty weight of knowing closes his drunken eyes
As he takes another swallow of his beer.
And though the dancing girls are stumbling,
And singing out of tune,
No one cares or puts on airs
In the Honky-Tonk Saloon.

The mayor knocks at the back door and asks for Rosie, and
He is stinking of his politics and gin.
The sheriff takes his ticket while he looks the other way,
And a sleazy sad-faced woman takes him in.
But his heart is racing madly
As she leads him to her room,
Through an old screen door on the second floor
Of the Honky-Tonk Saloon.

As she clutches the Good Book close to her firm young bosom,
The mayor's wife hears the evangelist with a sigh,
But she's haunted by demons who scream that her body is sinful
So she looks for her peace in the arms of the sweet bye-and-bye.
While her husband is gasping and moaning,
She's lost in a sacred swoon,
And she sails out the window up into the sky
Above the Honky-Tonk Saloon.

In the cold reflection of the mirror,
As he stacks the sparkling glasses row by row,
The bartender thanks the Lord for his home and family
As he watches the tangled faces come and go.
And at closing time he grabs his coat
And flies from the stifling gloom
To a warmer world a million miles away
From the Honky-Tonk Saloon.

But when the first morning light hits the tavern,
The only sounds in the air
Are the fitful snores of an old town drunk
Who had no place to go from there,
And the mumbled words of an idiot boy
Who's talking to his broom
And gazing out at the light of day
From the Honky-Tonk Saloon.

—Walter Alves



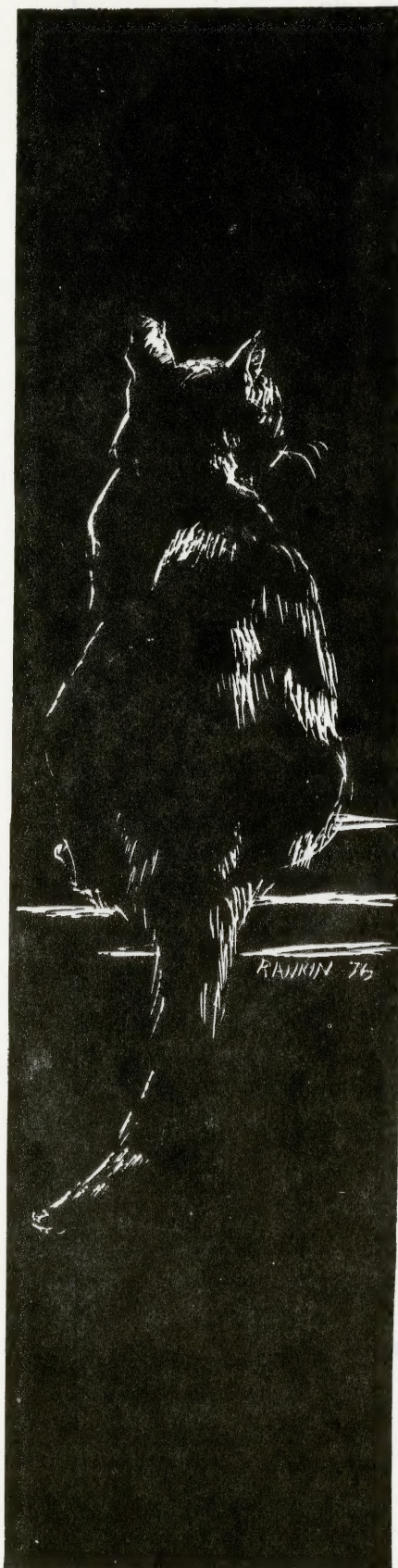


ILLUSTRATION BY ANN RANKIN

Company

Grandma's cat sat tall and statuesque in a coat of black and bits of white. In summer when the sun shone bright on Grandma's step, Grandma's cat sparkled like true mink as he sunned himself. Grandma's cat was Grandma's life, her only concern and care. And when one commented on her certain insanity for not keeping better company, she said, "What better company to keep than with someone who is all ears to listen."

Grandma's cat slept quietly by her side, whatever she was doing, morning, noon, and night. And when on occasion he rose to eat, Grandma would stroke and scratch his ears till he purred out his pleasure and delight. No doubt they made perfect company—Grandma, decades over her prime, and the cat, each of his nine lives fully spent.

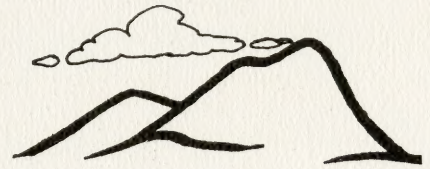
On a dry summer day, when the breezes barely ruffled the trees and Grandma's freshly washed sheets hung drying in the heat, Grandma's cat died.

Grandma spent the afternoon burying her cat and shortly afterwards, just at dusk, Grandma passed. She was found in her chair on the front porch, her face turned toward the setting sun, as if she were trying to catch its last rays of warmth.

—Jane M. Campbell

Jack mountain

A Dog-Eared Book and the Promise of Redbud



Today is Wednesday, February 25, 1976: New Hampshire has concluded the first bicentennial American presidential primary, ambitious men are on the go throughout the nation, Lieutenant Governor Jere Beasley—who visited Auburn with his legislative sub-committee and created a flurry that reverberates still—is on wing somewhere in Alabama, Patricia Hearst's trial on the charge of robbing the Hibernia National Bank continues in San Francisco, and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is attempting to limit couples in India to a maximum of two offspring.

Today, as every day, instantaneous electronic transmission bombards us with fragments of news and commentary from across the state, throughout the nation, around the world: Ronald Reagan is triumphant about his near-win over an incumbent president, that President finds no reason for any candidate who comes in second to gloat,

Jimmy Carter sees in the New Hampshire results evidence that the nation is once again willing to elect a Southerner to the highest office in the land, Senator Barry Goldwater believes that Richard Nixon—our last elected president—would do the country a favor by remaining in China, and F. Lee Bailey asserts that with every passing day Patricia Hearst's guilt or innocence "becomes less relevant": "...a big modern trial is a battle of gladiator lawyers."

Today, as on so many other days, the process of instantaneous communication creates disturbed emotions, confused thoughts, a yearning for an incisive comment that will provide understanding and a gleam of hope, and as usual we seek it in vain from the busy men who trouble the air-waves with incessant chatter, so we flip the switch and pick up a dog-eared book that falls open to this quotation from Paul Haines, Auburn University

English Professor Emeritus: "Where people are the participating stuff, their incalculable volitions, whether free or not, play hob with the best-laid plans of administrators and elude the analyst. Although we have picked up some understanding of the way of a serpent upon a rock and the way of a ship in the midst of the sea, the way of a man with a maid still baffles us."

Comforted with that sage thought, we place the worn book carefully upon the shelf, walk past the silent receptors of electronic impulse, and go out into the open world where Japanese magnolia petals flutter delicately, golden daffodils burst open to the sun, flowering quince flames rose, and redbud blushes with the pink of promise. Today is Wednesday, February the twenty-fifth, nineteen hundred and seventy-six *anno Domini*.



STOP

Stop.
Ponder in the silence.
Touch your lips to the window,
Then draw back
As the mist fades.
Paint moments
With your thoughts
Then touch me
Through your dreams,
To acknowledge my presence,
Too.

—Linda McKnight

TO LAURENCE POMMERROY

An eye I've seen alive beneath some brooks,
Smooth stone flung down that rips a surface flow.
Not blinking there, quite still, it upward looks
Beyond stained water glass where algae grow;
Up up it sees through minnows' silver rifts
The laser eye through me through higher trees
Past honking geese through clouds' amoebic shifts
To skies beyond and past to galaxies.
I gawk with two and covet just that one,
To gaze at fate, through fish to know the skies;
Distract to know all life, content with none,
And with my eye not squint at human lies.
But on this shore where lice and vermin nibble,
The trick is not to see but not to quibble.

—Harriet Joyce

INDEX OF CONTRIBUTORS

DR. ROBERT ANDELSON, a faculty member of the *Circle* Editorial Board, is a professor of philosophy. He has contributed to various scholarly journals and is the author of *Imputed Rights*.

PHIL BAILEY is a sophomore in pre-med. He has had poetry published in a past issue of the *Circle*.

BARBARA BALL, a December graduate in fine arts who is now working in Birmingham, has had artwork, photography, and fiction published in previous *Circle* issues.

JANICE BICKHAM, a senior in journalism who frequently contributes poetry to the *Circle*, publishes her first fiction in this issue. She plans a distinguished career sweeping out newsrooms after graduation.

SKIP BISHOP, a well-known radio personality and program director for UPC, is tickled to death to have one of his stories published in the *Circle*, as he has never written anything worth printing before.

DAVID BRADFORD, an expert on truck driving songs before they became a bourgeois fad, is a writer and photographer. He began his journalism career on his hometown newspaper while still in high school and moved steadily upward; he now writes graffiti on the Eighth Floor bathroom walls. Incidentally, he is on the *Circle* Editorial Board and a graduate student in English.

LT. COM. B.D. COLE, a Ph.D. candidate in history, has had book reviews and short articles published in *The Naval War College Review* and *The United States Naval Institute Proceedings*.

JAN COOPER, editor of the *Circle* last year and a staff member this year whether she likes it or not, is a senior in English. She hopes some day to put her degree to good use by owping a yarn shop.

TINA DAVIS, a freshman from Arab, Ala., plans a career in nursing.

DR. WILLIAM H. DAVIS is an assistant professor of philosophy. He has written *The Freewill Question* and *Peirce's Epistemology*, and has contributed several articles to scholarly journals. He is currently writing volume VII of his study, *Prolegomena to Any Future Chocolate Chip Cookies*.

TOM HAGOOD, a journalism major, has worked on the *Sand Mountain Reporter* and now lives on East Main Street in Albertville across the street from Pat Courington.

CECELIA HARDEN is a third quarter freshman in lab technology who proofreads with a dictionary in each hand.

LINDA LEAMING, associate editor of the *Circle*, is a tragically gifted but misunderstood senior majoring in philosophy. She has contributed fiction and feature articles to the *Circle* and is the resident expert on boxing illustrations in the magazine.

ERNESTINE LEAMINGWAY is an accomplished local author best known for her work as Activities Director for the Lee County Cattlebells (and a ding-a-ling if there ever was one). In 1971 she received the Henry J. Tibbs award for her book *The High Life of Bulls—or—How Green Was My Pasture*.

BILLY LEONARD, editor of the *Circle*, is a senior pre-law economics major. At the moment His Editorship is debating whether to attend law school next year at Harvard, Virginia, or Jones Law School. The only problem is that he hasn't been accepted at the latter.

KAYE LOVVORN, advisor to the *Circle*, is the editor of *The Auburn Alumnews*. She was the first student to graduate with a journalism major from Auburn (December 1964) and was once rumored to be working on a master's degree in English.

CATHY LUKA is a freshman in pre-business who has experimented with "rubbings" for the last four years.

RENA MOUNT, a student member of the *Circle* Editorial Board, is a senior in English. She has contributed poetry to *The Southern Humanities Review*, *Carolina Quarterly*, and *Folio*.

JACK MOUNTAIN is an enigmatic character whose very existence is subject to question.

ANNETTE NORRIS, a musician and poet currently disguised as a graduate student in English, is in her second year on the *Circle* Editorial Board. She has contributed poetry, fiction, and articles to the *Circle* and articles and reviews to the *Plainsman* and *Alumnews*.

NANCY PLAYLE, a graduate student in Textile Design, was tricked into accepting the position of Art Director this quarter. Now that she understands what the job is all about, it is too late; she has a long-term contract and cannot quit.

JERRY RODEN, JR., a faculty member of the *Circle* Editorial Board, teaches composition (English). He was editor of *The Auburn Alumnews* from 1957 to 1965 and is a regular columnist for that publication.

JIM SHOFFNER, from Enterprise, is a senior in journalism. Two of his short stories appeared in *The Miskatonic*, published for the Esoteric Order of Dagon, a publication of Georgia Southwestern College.

JORDAN SPENCER is an English major who reveals only that she is a self-made woman.

PAYTON VANZANT is a sophomore in pre-pharmacy who writes science fiction and fantasy as well as humorous essays.

DR. CHARLOTTE WARD, a faculty member of the *Circle* Editorial Board, is an assistant professor of physics. She has contributed to various scientific journals (including *The Journal of Molecular Spectroscopy*) and has written a physical science textbook for college students, *This Blue Planet*. She occasionally contributes to *Home Life*, a publication of the Southern Baptist Convention, and frequently graces *Circle* pages with her ruminations on topics of importance.

JIMMY WELDON began publishing personal essays in the *Circle* with the first issue. His experiences at the Martin Theater, which he recounts in this issue, are not limited to the audience. He made his tap-dancing debut on stage there at age eight, dressed in a white satin suit with green polka dot trim.

JOHN WILLIAMS, a graduate student in English, has been promoted from *Circle* Satirist to *Circle* Allegorist. He is from Auburn.

A.J. WRIGHT, a student member of the *Circle* Editorial Board, is a graduate student in English who has contributed both articles and poetry to the *Circle*. He is also a music critic for *The Auburn Plainsman* and an announcer on radio station WEGL.